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Our Town:
Articulating Place Meanings and Attachments in St. Johns Using
Resident-Employed Photography

by
Lauren Elizabeth Morrow Everett

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Urban Studies

Thesis Committee:
Karen Gibson, Chair
Naomi Adiv
M. Michelle Illuminato

Portland State University
2018

Abstract

The St. Johns neighborhood of North Portland is known for its strong regional identity, working class character, and diversity. Portland as a whole has experienced a major socioeconomic shift in the last ten years, and these changes are hitting St. Johns particularly hard. My research seeks to identify the place meanings that underpin sense of place, place attachment, and processes of attachment formation, among residents of the neighborhood. My research questions are: What are the objects of attachment? Why (the place meanings that underpin attachment)? And how (through what processes are attachments formed)? In what ways are the 'why' and 'how' intertwined? What are the commonalities across different variables, and how do those gesture at a holistic St. Johns essence, or sense of place?

My primary method was Resident-Employed Photography, supported by participant observation and archival research. This 'photo voice' method entailed giving single-use cameras to 43 place-attached St. Johns residents and asking them to photograph and write about twelve things that explain their connection. The results offer a rich, multifaceted understanding of place meanings and processes of attachment in St. Johns, and insight into what individual facets are most intrinsic to sense of place.

The intention of this research is to inform planning efforts, contribute to community dialogues about the future of St. Johns, empower residents to become civically engaged, and articulate a sense of place that can be leveraged by the community in spatial struggles.

Dedication

This research is dedicated to my parents, Susan and Michael, for their unwavering support, and for pointing the way to the intersection between poetic and rational thought. It is also dedicated to the people of St. Johns, whose deep love and care for their community is an inspiration.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisors: Karen Gibson for all of her support and guidance with this research and throughout my time at Portland State University; Naomi Adiv for her insightful feedback on this research and for her general advising; and M. Michelle Illuminato for bringing a creative lens to this work, and providing suggestions about how these words and images can tie into social practice art. I would also like to thank my cohort for their camaraderie and advice during my time at the university. I am particularly grateful for Darin Wahl for his feedback on this research, and for initially directing me to this method. This research would not have been possible in its current incarnation without a STAR Grant from the Institute for Sustainable solutions, and I thank Mary Vance for her support in that capacity. Deep gratitude also extends to Lindsay Jensen and Emily Sterling at the St. Johns Center for Opportunity, for generously taking on the task of packet distribution at their office. I would also like to thank all of the members of the St. Johns community who have given their time and knowledge, served as invaluable resources, and brought their enthusiasm to this research. I am also indebted to the work of countless musicians from all over the world, whose music has provided an indispensable soundtrack to my studies over the past year and a half. Lastly, thank you to the good people of St. Johns, for all that you do.

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Chapter I: Introduction

“A meditation upon human dwelling reveals our primal embodied existence, our being-in-the-world. The notion of dwellings is the most taken-for-granted aspect of human existence. For this very reason, inhabitation, our familiar though enigmatic circumstance, is the most obscure problem upon which we may reflect.” - Richard Lang (in *Dwelling, Place and Environment*, p.201)

Driving up St. Helens bypass 30, heading north from downtown Portland, the emerald green suspension bridge stretches across the Willamette River, sparkling in the late afternoon sun. This is the northern most bridge in Portland, and it is also the literal edge of the city. Coming off of the bridge, the Georgian-style brick town hall to the right, and the large contemporary building to the left, suggest a neighborhood in transition. Traffic is suddenly funneled into a classic streetcar-era main street, the kind which usually only exists in small towns, or *The Twilight Zone*. Underneath the bridge is a verdant, grassy expanse situated under cement gothic arches, where children wade in the lapping shore of the river, and dogs frolic in clover. A man with a bucket of soap makes huge iridescent bubbles, which float up toward the bridge's green trusses and disappear.

This is St. Johns. This community of over 15,000 is situated at the tip of the North Portland peninsula, where the Willamette and Columbia Rivers meet. An independent municipality until 1914, St. Johns' geographic isolation and origin as a competing city have shaped its identity to an intense degree. It is known for its working class heritage, rooted in over 150 years of industry. During WWII, over 1,600 units of public housing were built in St. Johns as part of a massive effort to house the 30,000 workers flooding to

Kaiser's three shipyards in North Portland (Portland City Planning Commission, 1959).

This legacy of the public housing has made the area a haven for low-income households, and in recent decades it has been known for its economic, racial, and ethnic diversity.

Residents have a fierce sense of local identity and pride, with a tradition of grassroots organizing around various issues. Social events like the annual St. Johns Parade bring the community together, and the 114-year-old free newspaper, *The St. Johns Review*, keeps people informed. Local historians are in the process of starting a St. Johns Museum. This is a place where small businesses are valued, and proprietors and employees are generally friendly and amiable. At the same time, St. Johns has faced substantial challenges with crime and other social issues over the past several decades, and has a long history of fraught relations with city government and bureaucracy.

In recent years St. Johns has experienced the same socioeconomic shifts seen all over Portland, and in cities across the US and beyond, with the 'return to the city' movement and resulting gentrification of neighborhoods in the urban core. As a result of this increased demand Portland is experiencing a major housing shortage, and St. Johns has become attractive to developers hoping to capitalize on rising rents and land values. A multitude of large, modern buildings have been constructed over the past decade, prompting spirited discussion on public forums like the neighborhood association meetings, and the active Facebook group page. Over the last ten years, this disinvested neighborhood has also seen substantial economic revitalization, improvement in schools,

and decrease in crime. Many of these changes have been widely perceived as positive. However, sentiment about change is a mixture of anxiety and optimism, with the former comprising the more vocal contingent. The source of concern is centered around practical considerations like housing costs and residential displacement - both of which are increasing - and also on less tangible elements, like erosion of local identity.

Sense of place and place attachment research examines the person-place relationship, as mediated by variables like age and length of residency. It asks questions about the what, why and how of attachment: the places, their meanings, and the processes through which the bonds are formed. Because these phenomena are so complex and intertwined, this phenomenological approach considers their multifaceted nature and causality. Scholarship that specifically looks at place meanings that underpin attachment can be helpful for understanding local context, and can also illuminate the motivation behind civic engagement. The process through which meanings and attachments are formed is also of interest, in understanding these bonds.

Environmental and community psychologists Manzo and Perkins (2006) identify a literature gap between place attachment and planning theory. The former exclusively focuses on the individual's relationship, and the latter does not dig deeply enough into the meanings and attachments that motivate engagement. Insight about attachment on a community scale can be useful for planners, public officials and designers, in helping them "look beyond the physical dimension and consider a more holistic sociocultural

experience" (Beidler & Morrison, 2016, p. 212; Wirth, et al., 2016). It has also been found to have the potential to galvanize social capital, community activism and engagement (Perkins & Mihaylov, 2014; Manzo & Perkins, 2006). Additionally, understanding place meanings behind attachment can be an asset to the community itself, when addressing issues of gentrification and neighborhood change. The person-place bond is much more difficult to articulate than the importance of a material necessity like housing or proximity to the workplace, yet it is intrinsic to mental, emotional, and community health (Apfelbaum, 2000; Fullilove, 2005; Tall, 1996; Manzo, 2014).

My research seeks to identify place meanings that underpin sense of place, place attachment and processes of attachment, among residents of St. Johns. The intention of the research is: to inform planning and policy; facilitate increased conversation in the community about a holistic vision for the future and how to achieve outcomes; and galvanize residents to become engaged. My research questions are: What are the objects of attachment, and why (i.e. what are the place meanings)? Through what processes (how) are attachments formed? In what ways do the 'how' and 'why' intertwine? What are the commonalities across different variables, and how do those gesture at a holistic St. Johns essence, or sense of place?

Resident-Employed Photography is a qualitative visual method that entails asking participants to photograph and reflect on specific aspects of their environment. One of the strengths of this approach is that it foregrounds the participant, making them the expert,

and inverting traditional power dynamics in the researcher/subject relationship. The open-ended structure also allows for a richer spectrum of data to emerge than in a method that uses researcher-constructed categories. It also creates a situation where the participant can reflect on the prompt without the researcher present, which can produce more thoughtful responses (Beckley et al., 2007). Finally, the method produces a body of images and text that can be useful to the community, both for internal discussion, and for communications with outside entities.

I am building on the four years I have spent in the neighborhood, which have given me an embodied knowledge of local culture and community, and useful personal connections. It is my hope that this data will be facilitate community dialogues across differences, and assist city planners in understanding community attachments on a holistic level by illuminating place meanings that make St. Johns the unique place it is. There have been divisions within the community about how to best proceed in the face of land use decisions, by bringing clarity to frequently used but nebulous terms like 'small town feel', this research will hopefully catalyze dialogs within the community about the constituent parts of this sense of place, and how they can be preserved.

I envision this as an ongoing project that can be expanded with subsequent iterations, administered by community organizations, artists, schools, and residents. With more lead time for recruitment and to forge outreach partnerships, this method could be especially insightful in articulating place meanings among St. Johns' marginalized

communities, who tend not to be as engaged in local organizations as middle-aged white homeowners. Lastly, these photographs and texts comprise an archive of a moment in time, and my intention is to make them publicly accessible on some platform, before the end of the year.

Chapter II: Case Background

1. Overview and Demographics

Located at the confluence of the Columbia and the Willamette rivers, St. Johns is situated on one of the most remote sites in the City of Portland. It is accessible from the east via Lombard/Bypass 30, and from the west via the St. Johns Bridge, which spans the Willamette. It contains or is in close proximity to a large volume of natural areas, including: Smith and Bybee Wetlands, Pier Park, Cathedral Park, Kelley Point Park, Sauvie Island and Forest Park. Regionally it is part of North Portland, and specifically 'the peninsula', which has a geographic and cultural coherence. The adjacent neighborhoods on either side are Portsmouth, University Park, and Linnton. The current population is 15,595, and the community is served by two elementary schools (James John and Sitton), a middle school (George), and a high school (Roosevelt). The Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI) recognizes two neighborhoods within the St. Johns area: St. Johns and Cathedral Park. The total area of these combined is about 11 square miles, and they will be referred to as St. Johns for the duration of this paper.

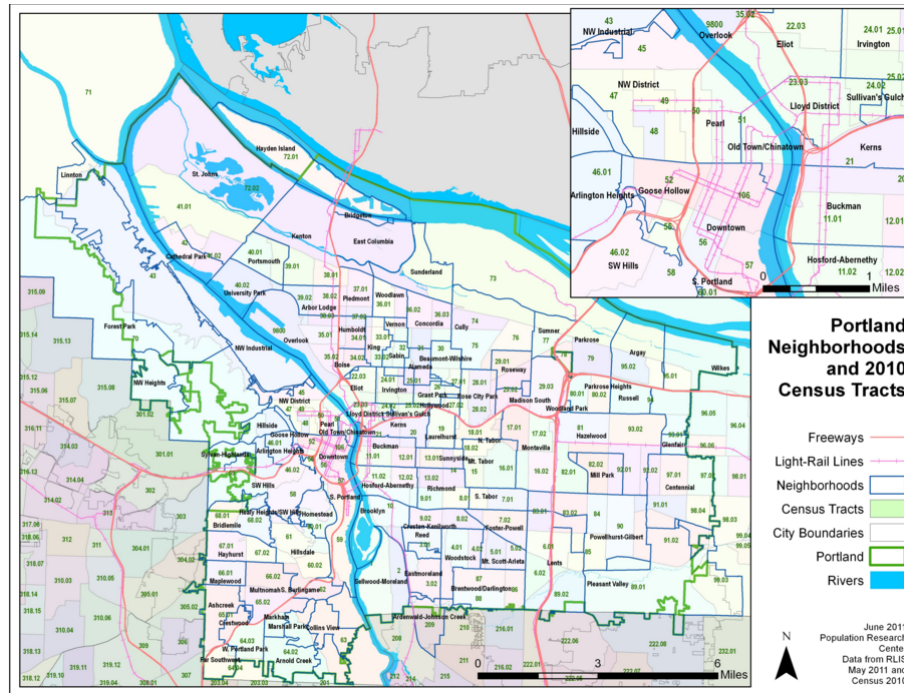


Figure 1: Map of Portland neighborhoods and census tracts. St. Johns is located at the upper left

St. Johns' population has about the same percentage of Black and White residents as the city average, with a higher percentage of Latino residents, and a lower percentage of Asian residents.

	% St. Johns	% Portland	Median Household Income St. Johns	Median Household Income Portland
Asian	3.9%	7.58%	N/A	\$56,539
Black	5.6%	5.71%	\$15,136	\$27,000
Latino	15.86%	9.67%	\$31,574	\$40,982
Native	1.2%	.69%	N/A	\$29,859
White	78.9%	77.73%	\$51,464	\$56,964

Table 1: Population and income demographics by race. (Percentage from PolicyMap, income data from the State of Housing In Portland report, using data from the 2010-2010 ACS Five Year Estimates)

Median income by race in St. Johns paints a revealing picture. Between 2000 and 2014 White incomes rose from \$49,820 to \$51,464 which is about \$5,500 under the city's median income. Meanwhile, Black incomes plummeted from \$26,388 to \$15,136 (versus

\$27,000 citywide), and Latino incomes dropped from \$42,925 to \$31,574 (versus \$40,982 citywide), which may be attributed to the influx of immigrants in the latter population. These numbers suggest intensifying poverty along racial lines, which corresponds to the high regional segregation of poverty for these two groups (Brown Diversity and Disparities Index). Combined with the much higher likelihood of Black and Latino households to be renters, these groups in St. Johns are the most vulnerable to displacement in St. Johns.

Homeownership rates for most dense and diverse census block group in St. Johns during this time period were: 4.4 percent of Black households, 27 percent of Latino households, and 55 percent of white households. Black homeownership shows a dramatic discrepancy with the city averages of 27.86 percent (PolicyMap). Due to Oregon's weak renter protections, this indicates a Black population with an even higher displacement risk than citywide. Meanwhile, in that same block group White and Latino homeownership increased slightly. Overall homeownership rates in the three census tracts were within ten points below or above the citywide average, making this discrepancy in Black homeownership even more of an anomaly.

The percentage and number of residents of color has diminished between the 2000 census and the 2012-16 American Community Survey, and per-capita incomes have risen. Given that the population percentage of people of color citywide has barely changed between 2000 and 2016, the diminishing percentages in St. Johns are notable as an

indicator of neighborhood change. St. Johns consists of three census tracts, which are referred to below as north, southwest, and southeast:

	North SJ	SW SJ	SE SJ	Citywide
POC pop 2000	35.78%	27.55%	27.01%	22.22%
POC pop 2012-16	25.22%	16.61%	18.16%	22.27%
POC Income 2000	\$13,486	\$16,945	\$15,063	\$22,643
POC income 2012-16	\$24,784	\$28,900	\$30,354	\$34,778

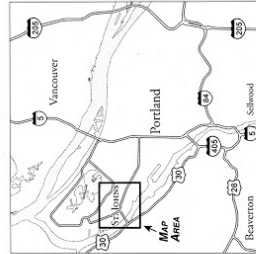
Table 2: Population and income changes for residents of color (Policymap)

Students at Roosevelt High School speak over 27 different languages, and it is one of the most ethnically diverse schools in Oregon (Portland Public Schools, 2017a). In the 2016–2017 school year Roosevelt High School's student population was 38.8 percent Latino, 28.3 percent White, 17.5 percent Black, 5.3 percent Asian, 2.5 percent Pacific Islander, 1.4 percent Native American, and 6.2 percent mixed race. 48 percent are considered Economic Disadvantaged, and 62 percent of high school age children in the area attend the school (Portland Public Schools, 2017b).

THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF St. Johns PORTLAND, OREGON



- NEIGHBORHOOD ASSET**
 - Community Center
 - School
 - Library
- TRANSPORTATION**
 - Federal Highway
 - Major Arterial
 - Local Road
 - Railroad Tracks
- BOUNDARIES**
 - Neighborhood Boundary
- BUILDINGS AND LAND USE**
 - Building Footprint
 - Multi-Family Housing Development
 - Neighborhood Center
 - School Grounds
 - Parks and Open Space



Source: GIS on Portland State University, ESRI, 2005
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Figure 2: Map of St. Johns and environs (Bureau of Planning and Sustainability)

2. History of St. Johns

1840 - 1940

The Chinookan village Gahlawakshahin ('those of the dam') was located just west of St. Johns, where Terminal 4 is now. Like most of the region's Native American population, it was severely impacted by the smallpox epidemic of the early 1800s (Boyd & Zenk, 2018). In addition to the existing Columbia River Slough, which was once open at both ends, there was a slough that cut across the peninsula from the Willamette River to the Columbia Slough, and emptied at this spot (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1976). According to oral histories, local children in the early 20th Century used to collect arrowheads around this area, and this is a known archeological site (Boyd & Zenk, 2018). Lewis and Clark's party camped for a night in the vicinity, somewhere in the between the University of Portland and Terminal 4.

During the 1840s and 50s, emigrants of European descent were heading to Oregon during the great cross-country migration of the time. The region's Provisional Government allowed them to register claims of up to 640 acres of land per married couple, or 320 per free white male. The Oregon Donation Land Law was passed by Congress in 1850, legitimizing the titles in the eyes of the US Government (Robbins, 2018). The eponymous James John settled on the piece of land where the northern foundation of the St. Johns Bridge now sits in 1846, and opened a store shortly thereafter. He filed a land claim in 1850 for 320 acres, and started operating a ferry in 1852 (St.

Johns Heritage Association, 1984). In 1850 the twelve original families of St. Johns lore settled in the area, some of whom still have descendants in the neighborhood (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1984). According to a booklet published by the St. Johns Heritage Association for the 1976 bicentennial, "The personality of St. Johns was established by early emigrants. Only the courageous ventured to the new country filled with struggles and difficulties" (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1976, n.p.).

James John filed the plat for St. Johns in Oregon City in 1865, and town was dedicated in 1868 (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1984). The origin of the name is disputed, but according to one account, it was called St. Johns because John was a recluse and a hermit, and people referred to him as "Saint" (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1976). The plural of John, rather than a possessive form, is likely an error that was repeated until it became official. An *Oregonian* article from 1861 spells the town name 'St. John's', and there are other sources where it is written 'St. John'. The newspaper alternates between the plural and possessive versions over the next few years, adding to the confusion. John had a vision that one day St. Johns and Linnton would be large cities, rivaling neighboring Portland (Nelson, 2011). Early boosters like Paul Kelly of Boston also envisioned a thriving metropolis on this site. He hoped to capitalize on the area's strategic location, and promoted the peninsula area to east coast residents as the "Manhattan of the West" (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1984). Resource extraction started around this time, with lumber harvesting and milling from the heavily wooded area (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1976).

James John died in 1886, and stipulated that his estate was to be leased for 15 years, and then sold to build schools. Out of state relatives sued unsuccessfully to get a portion of the estate, and James John High School was later built with the funds (Nelson, 2011). James John's spirit of civic duty has been cited as a foundation of St. Johns' community orientation and volunteerism over the years. Steam powered streetcars began providing transportation to Portland in 1889, making 2 trips a day, and by 1890, had increased to 10 per day (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1984). In 1891 St. Johns' was annexed by the city of Albina, along with the entire peninsula. At the time, Albina was also competing economically with Portland, and the annexation sought to increase its power. The population of St. Johns at the time was around 500 people (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1984). Mere months later, Albina was annexed by the City of Portland. Dissent arose in St. Johns over Portland's higher taxes, and it was separated from Portland by act of the State legislature in 1895 (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1976). *The Oregonian* reported, "The residents of that portion of the city known as St. Johns are jubilant over their success in securing a divorce from Portland, and a speedy return to rural simplicity" (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1976, n.p.).

In 1902 the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company extended its line from Portland to St. Johns, catalyzing its rapid industrialization. St. Johns incorporated as a city in 1903, and by 1904 had increased its population to 2,000 (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1984). Of its exponential growth, that same year *The Evening Post* wrote,

"It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that this hustling burg has made genuine progress of the distinctly western character than any other of community similar size and opportunities. She has not depended on the patronage of those who reside or who do business in the metropolis, but essaying to work out her destiny, she has gone about establishing industries and building homes until, within little more than a score of months, her population has jumped from hundreds to thousands, and in addition to this she has laid out streets, built churches and schoolhouses and assumed the airs of a growing and prosperous city, such as surprised one about a town not yet in its teens" (in Nelson, 2011, p. 15).

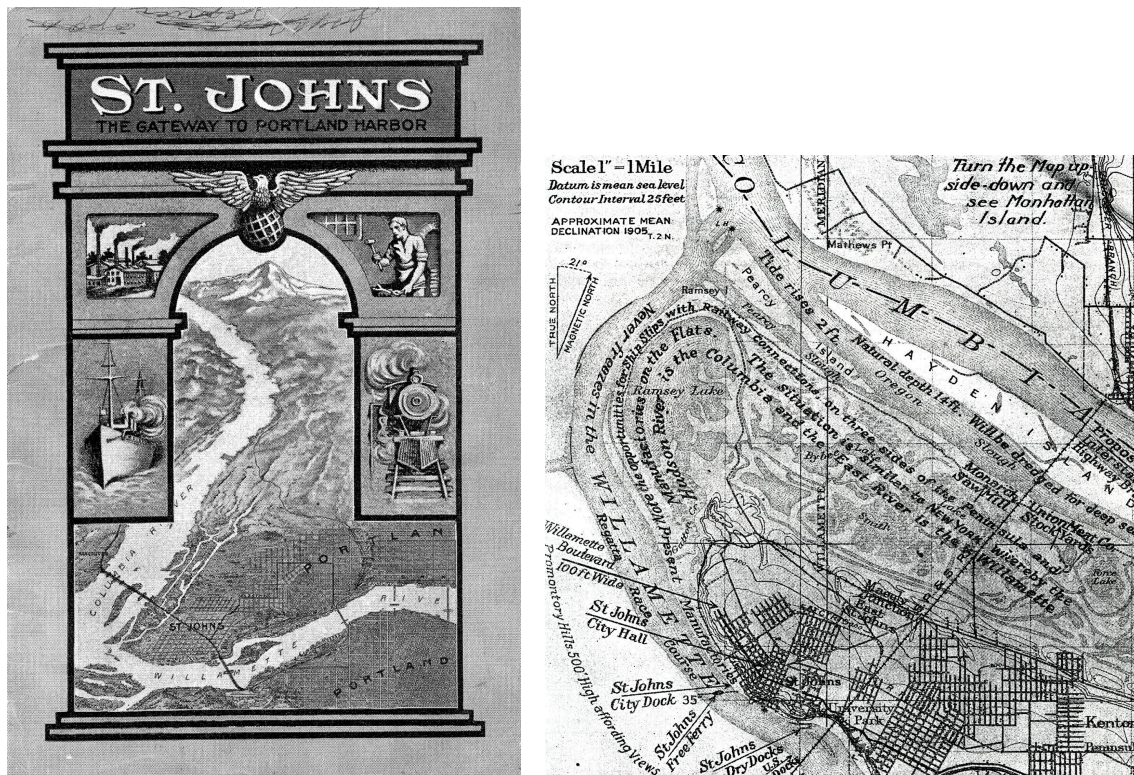


Figure 3: 1907 booster materials from *St. Johns - The Gateway to Portland Harbor* and the *St. Johns Commercial Club* (Nelson, 2011)

In 1907 there were reports that St. Johns officials had embezzled public funds, which began to turn the tide toward annexation by Portland. Taxes were higher in St. Johns than in Portland, and faith in the public sector was low. A 1911 vote by both St. Johns and Portland on annexing St. Johns passed, but the city's anti-annexation officials

appealed it on the grounds that "a city, in committing suicide, is violating its charter" (The Oregonian, 1915). The town had 6,000 residents by this time (The Oregonian, 1910). The Oregon Supreme Court ruled in favor of this plea, setting an important precedent for municipalities all over Oregon, and in late 1914 Representative Lewis of St. Johns submitted a bill to the Legislature that would allow it to set rules concerning annexations. An election was held again on April 5th, 1915 for annexation to Portland, and passed, 799 in favor and 499 against (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1984).

Although St. Johns was officially a part of Portland, issues of connectivity to the rest of the city continued to present a challenge. The only way to reach downtown Portland was to either take a lengthy train ride all the way across the peninsula and south to the the bridge, or to take a ferry across the river. In 1924 the Peninsula Bridge Committee formed to address this issue, and was comprised of representatives from both St. Johns and Linnton. A measure to fund the bridge in the general election failed, but under St. Johns leadership, a coalition succeeded in passing bond for \$4,250,000 in the 1928 primary election (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1976). It was designed by esteemed engineer David B. Steinman, who would later say it was his favorite of all his many commissions (Noles, 2011).

The St. Johns Bridge opened on June 13, 1931 as part of the Festival of Roses. The formal dedication took place on the steps of the old city hall, and included speeches from various public officials. This was followed by a ceremony at the actual bridge, where

Queen Rachel of Rosaria would “daintily but positively snip the silken ribbon barrier and thereby officially open the bridge to traffic” (The Oregonian, 1931, p. 4). This was followed by a release of homing pigeons bearing messages to mayors of other Pacific coast cities. Festivities following the ribbon cutting included: two fire engines with sirens blaring, traversing its length from both sides; watercrafts in the water below following suit; a parade across the bridge; and a program of watersports at the conclusion of the parade (The Oregonian, 1931). The bridge heralded the beginning of a new era in St. Johns, connecting it with the outside world, but also bringing in traffic and making it part of Highway 30. It was no longer a "quiet little town." (Miles, 1990, p.55)



Figure 4: St. Johns Bridge Dedication, June 13th 1931 (Nelson, 2011)

When World War II broke out, several large shipyards were built in the North Portland area as part of Henry Kaiser's shipbuilding empire. The Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation was located in St. Johns by Terminal 4 (the same site where the Native American village had been situated), and produced nearly 600 Victory and Liberty ships between 1941 and 1945. At its height the enterprise employed 35,000 workers - 30 percent of whom were women - and this was one of three Kaiser shipyards in the vicinity. The shipyards discontinued operations shortly after the war (Colton, 2010).

Workers flocked to the area from all over the United States, and many of them lived in the nearly 1,600 units of wartime housing that were constructed in St. Johns (Portland City Planning Commission, 1959). Wartime labor provided lucrative opportunities for Black workers as well as Whites. One participant in my research remembers a substantial Black community that formed in the wake of the Vanport Flood of 1948¹, in the former St. Johns Woods and Parkside Commons apartments. Though many units were removed after the war, 300 still remained as of 1957 (Portland City Planning Commission, 1959). This area later became the site of other public housing developments, and affordable multifamily housing of similar density and style. Dorothea Lensch of the Portland Bureau of Parks initiated the purchase of the gymnasium of the former Oregon Shipyard Corporation, which was relocated adjacent to downtown in 1948, where it became the St. Johns Community Center in 1948 (Nelson, 2011).

¹ The Vanport flood affected the massive public housing town of Vanport, which was located further east on the peninsula. It permanently displaced 18,000 people, dispersing survivors all over the Portland area.

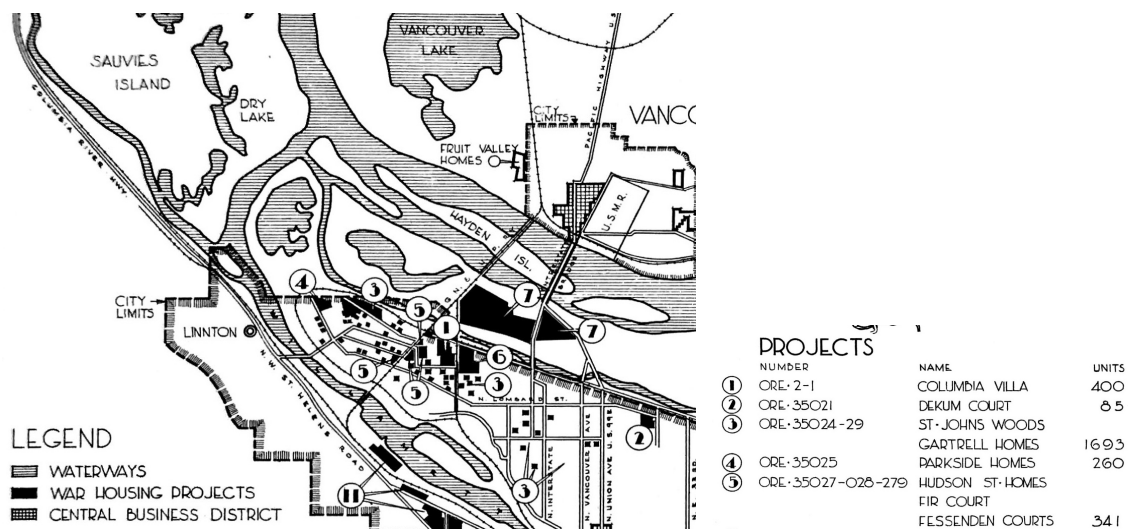


Figure 5: Map of War Housing Projects in North Portland (Federal Public Housing Authority)

1950s

By 1956 the population had reached almost 13,000. The City of Portland initiated a community planning effort in response to economic stagnation that had likely occurred as a result of the wartime influx of workers to the area, followed by the 1948 closure of the shipyard. The unemployment rate was also higher than the city average, at 13.2 percent versus 7.4 percent. During this era there was a high percentage of owner occupancy relative to city rates, with the lowest average home values in the city. This may be attributed to its remote geographic location, or some other factor. Per-capita income was about the same as the rest of the city, and the population comprised 3.2 percent of Portland's total population.

There were 25 manufacturing firms located in St. Johns in the late 1950s, which accounted for 10.2 percent of the city's industrial employment. Employment

characteristics in the 1950 census revealed a higher than average number of craftsmen, foremen, and operatives, and lower than average number of professional, managers, officials, and proprietors. This is in keeping with the area's industrial roots and blue-collar identity. 'Operatives and kindred', which are industrial trade workers and transportation workers, made up 26.8 percent of the population, versus 15.4 percent in the MSA (Portland City Planning Commission, 1959).



Figure 6: Lombard Street, 1952

The issue of freight traffic coming across the St. Johns Bridge and cutting through the town center and residential streets toward the industrial district was discussed, and alternate routes were proposed in the plan. It envisioned a bypass expressway parallel to the Willamette Riverfront just underneath Willamette Boulevard, and/or two bypass loop expressways that circumvented the neighborhood. None of these proposed mitigation tactics were adopted, and this continues to be a heavily-discussed issue. The commercial

center was also determined to be ailing and inadequate to serve the community, with business dropping off and traffic congestion. The plan proposed a one-way street system, creation of pedestrian malls, off-street parking, and eliminating some on-street parking - none of which appear to have been implemented. General recommendations for the ailing commercial district were: Unification of the district through architecture and planning; improvement of site layout; elimination of blight; provision of new amenities; and the achievement of cohesion of management. The St. Johns downtown was the main commercial center for the peninsula at the time, and continues to serve in this capacity today.

1970s

The 1970s were a time of heightened community advocacy and activism in St. Johns. Cathedral Park is one of the community's most beloved parks, and one its greatest grassroots success stories. The space under the bridge had never been landscaped for public use, and this time it served as an unofficial dumping ground for the area. After discussing how appropriate the site would be for a park, the St. Johns Community craft class held the first annual Cathedral Park Festival under the bridge, in 1972. The following year, the North Portland Citizens Committee established a Cathedral Park subcommittee, and held the second annual festival. This attracted the attention of City Commissioner Frank Ivancie and County Commissioner Mel Gordon, who came to St. Johns meet with stakeholders about the possibility of securing funds to create an official park, and The Portland Development Commission took over the effort. The park was

officially dedicated in 1979, with the grand opening held in 1980 (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1990).

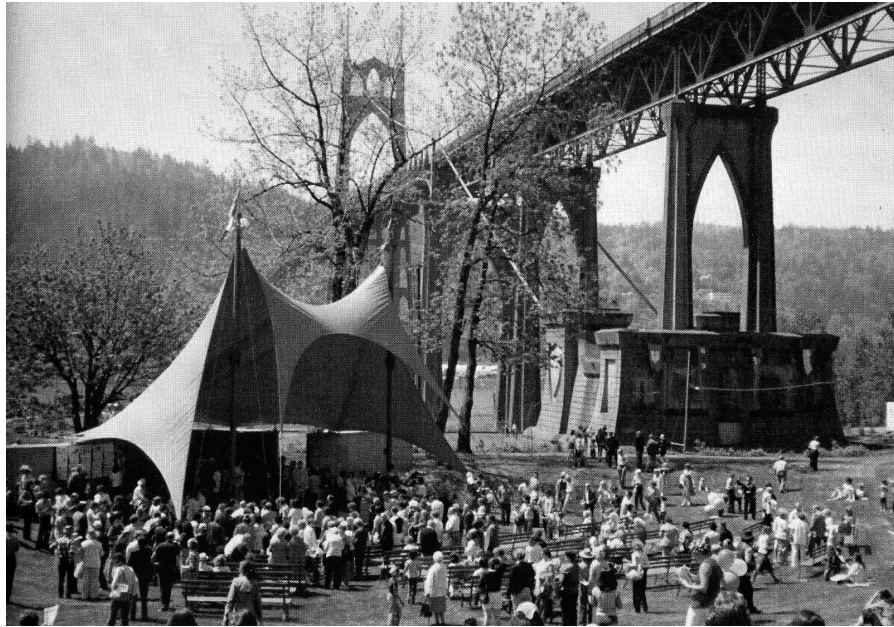


Figure 7: Cathedral Park grand opening, 1980

Economic revitalization in the commercial core was once again a focus, and in the early 1970s the St. Johns Boosters (founded in 1926) requested the City's assistance in developing an action plan for the district. Work on the plan started in 1974, as part of the Housing and Community Development program, which was a joint effort of the planning department and Portland Development Commission. It consisted of three main elements: (1) physical improvements via public works, (2) building design plan and handbook, (3) business development program. The auto-oriented nature of the downtown strip on Lombard was one of the main issues the plan sought to address (City of Portland Development Commission, 1978).

The St. Johns Building Improvement Handbook was funded with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Among the eight goals set forth in the publication, "stabilize and renew the economic and physical vitality of St. Johns" was balanced with the need to "preserve and continue the cultural, economic, and historical qualities" of the area (ibid, p.1). The handbook also encouraged development and maintenance of second story housing in the business district for low-income, elderly, and single residents. This is notable because it does not appear to have been implemented, nor does it correspond with current development trends in the commercial area. Addressing the issue of traffic in the commercial core, it stipulated Lombard was to remain a pedestrian-oriented area, while Ivanhoe was to be more auto-oriented.

The first guideline for building improvements was that new developments “should respect and respond to the material, scale, and form of surrounding structures” (ibid, p.2). Accordingly, it provided detailed practical tools and advice for renovations, and included a style guide for suggested aesthetic improvements. The emphasis on preserving cultural heritage through the built environment many have been influenced by the national historic preservation movement of the era. The St. Johns Town Plaza was dedicated in 1979 as part of the St. Johns Business District Improvement Program, and the "welcome island," later known as Ivy Island, was also part of the activity of this era (Nelson, 2011). Branding efforts included the St. Johns gateways signs still in use.



Figure 8: Residents congregate on the new central plaza, 1979 (5)

1980s to early 2000s

Mirroring effects of deindustrialization on cities nationwide, crime, drug use, and diminishing economic vitality were significant issues in North Portland in the latter 20th Century. According to the St. Johns Boosters' website, "During the 1980's and 1990's, St Johns saw a shift from a strong dependence on the industry located on the Peninsula to a more mixed and commercial economy. This era was also characterized by a generalized downturn in the neighborhoods' economy" (St. Johns Boosters, 2018). Roosevelt High School had the highest dropout rate in the Portland Public School district in 1990, at 20 percent versus 7.3 percent citywide. Teachers theorized this was a result of the transient nature of the population in north St. Johns, where many households moved multiple times within the school year due to economic hardship (Graves, 1990). Likewise, George Middle School had a record number of suspensions, with 104 out of 625 students facing

suspension for at least one day in the 1991 school year (Baker, 1991). In an article about the issues facing St. Johns schools, the reporter referred to the north section of St. Johns as a "tough part of neighborhood" (ibid).

By the early 1990s the relationship between community advocates and the City and County governments became increasingly strained. When the Multnomah County announced they were opening a parole office in the neighborhood in 1996, community members rallied around opposing it, claiming that it would bring increased crime to the area. The effort was unsuccessful, and the office opened (Mahar, 1996). Around the same time, the city proposed closing the police precinct that had been located in the former city hall building, and the future of the county library was also in question. These events and others prompted a campaign for succession from Portland, which launched in 1997. According to *The Oregonian*, some members of the St. Johns Neighborhood Association were "fed up with city officials about what they believe is a lack of attention and commitment by the city to their area's needs. They feel St. Johns and the North Portland peninsula are dumping grounds for everything nobody else wants." (Nkrumah & Snell, 1997). The following year the St. Johns Neighborhood Association fought a proposed affordable housing development in State Appellate Court. Their opposition was grounded in the belief that more subsidized housing would increase income segregation in north St. Johns, and attract more low-income and minority residents to the area. Specifically, they felt "the project would cause 'more crime and less English-speaking children' in schools" (Hortsch, 1998).

Efforts to revitalize the business district began anew in the late 1990s. The community received a \$26,000 grant from the Bureau of Housing and Community Development, and a \$113,000 grant from Metro to make improvements. The intention was for downtown St. Johns to be on par with areas like the Hawthorne district, as a destination shopping and entertainment center. The objective was to attract "the young, well-educated customer who is willing to spend a little more for good quality" (Fitzgibbon, 1999). Meanwhile, 15 percent of the population in St. Johns were non-native English speakers. A survey of that segment of the community revealed a desire for services like counseling, education and job training, rather than a revitalized commercial center.

St. Johns resident and hip hop artist Mic Capes grew up in the multi-family housing of north St. Johns, and describes a palpable social and physical separation between the two parts. This section of the neighborhood, which contains public housing and other affordable multi-family housing, is where the highest concentration of St. Johns' communities of color and immigrant populations have traditionally resided. It is bounded on the south by busy Fessenden Street, and on the north by Columbia Boulevard. Capes recalls growing up around other low-income households of varying racial and ethnic backgrounds, in a tight-knit community bonded by mutual conditions of poverty, and daily struggle for survival (personal interview, April 4, 2018). Addressing the needs of these residents in advocacy and planning continues to be a challenge in St. Johns.

3. St. Johns Identity and Narrative

Cultural 'imaginary'

St. Johns is widely known throughout Portland for its distinctive, insular character, which lends itself to the frequently mentioned ‘small town feel’. A 1976 article in *The Oregonian* described it as a “fairly homogeneous working class area, where the many longtime residents take an active interest in preserving the neighborhood’s identity” (Mancuso, 1976). The main components of the St. Johns imaginary and narrative are: the pioneer spirit; a history of industry and entrepreneurship; working-class residents; tight-knit community; small businesses with friendly proprietors; proximity to natural areas and the two rivers; racial and ethnic diversity (in recent decades); and a sense of independence and separation from Portland - both geographically and culturally.

This last aspect is especially important to understanding St. Johns’ narrative. The 1959 St. Johns Plan notes, "since its annexation to Portland in 1915, this community has retained, in large part, the identity and cohesiveness which it possessed as a separate town prior to joining the city" (Portland City Planning Commission, 1959, p.13). In 2002, a *Daily Journal of Commerce* article described it as; "perched high over the Willamette River's bank in North Portland, the St. Johns neighborhood long has stood as a community unto its own, knitted together over time and geography” (Fehrenbacher, 2002, n.p.). This is reinforced by St. Johns’ ‘underdog’ identity, which comes from years of perceived disinvestment by extra local government, and external stigmatization due to crime.

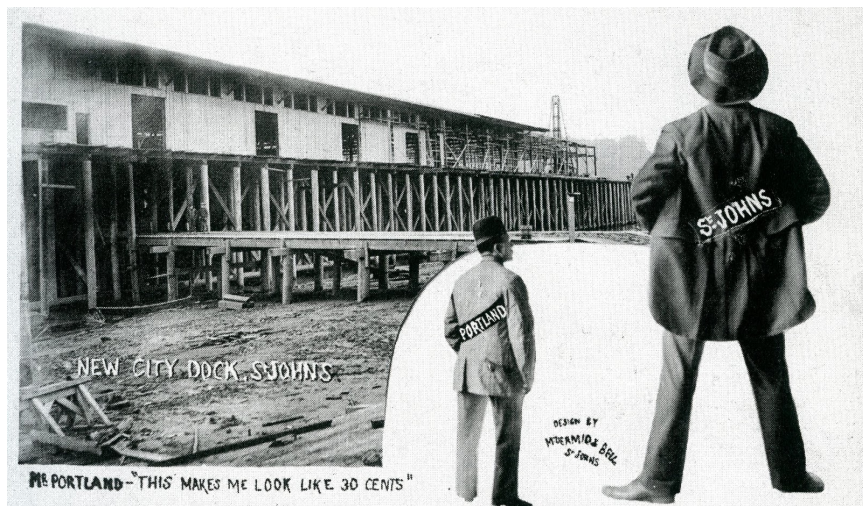


Figure 9: St. Johns City Dock, 1909 (Gholston Collection)



Figure 10: St. Johns residents, 1970s, note the "St. Johns, Oregon" shirt (Facebook)

Memories of early St. Johns cast its rural and industrial character in a romantic light. Obert Norgard recalls of his youth in the 1920s, "strong memories of standing on the viaduct, smelling the coal smoke and listening to the clickety-clickety, cud-ut cud-ut as the wheels of the speedy passenger trains crossed the rail joins at fifty miles per hour" (Miles, 1990, p.53). Residents who grew up in the early Twentieth Century fondly recall the area's many natural features, including the Columbia Slough, Five Miles Lake (now

Smith Lake), Mock's Bottom (now Swan Island), and the forested areas of St. Johns - some of which still exist as Pier Park.

Change has also been an intrinsic part of St. Johns' character since its inception as a frontier town. In a conversation with Art and Walt Morey that was published in a St. Johns Heritage Association book, one of the brothers explains how the character of the neighborhood withstands these natural vicissitudes:

"Even so, with the changes of the years, there is a certain air, a certain something about St. Johns that stays the same. The future is going to be just about like the past...it's going to change. There's going to be more industry, more people, but it will always be St. Johns! At any year, someone will walk in and be able to write history and say, "This is St. Johns, as it was, as it is, and as it's going to be!" (St. Johns Heritage Association, 1996, n.p.)

The belief in a 'St. Johns essence' has been articulated repeatedly over the years, and the thrust of progress has generally strived for a balance between economic development on one hand, and honoring cultural and built history on the other. Exploring the lives and genealogy of early pioneer families, and the history of both industry and small businesses, are two of the main topics of historical inquiry that the St. Johns Heritage Association focuses on. The organization meets once monthly at the local branch of the Multnomah County Library. A St. Johns museum is currently in the fundraising stage of development. It is a joint effort of The Boosters, Convergence Architecture, and other local groups, and its mission is to provide a physical location to

display materials that have not been easily accessible to the public, like the St. Johns Heritage Association's collection.

As is the case with cultural narratives, some stories become historical record, and others do not. The St. Johns narrative not found in the Heritage Association's materials, or in any of the available literature, is the history and culture of the multi-racial, low-income enclave in the northern part of town.² In recent years, hip hop MCs (master of ceremonies) from St. Johns have been receiving acclaim in Portland and beyond, bringing these stories to the public consciousness. Many of these rappers grew up in either north St. Johns or the Columbia Villa housing projects in the adjacent Portsmouth neighborhood, and both of these locales figure prominently in the lyrics and imagery of their music videos. Stories of growing up poor in a marginalized community, in a stigmatized part of Portland, paint an alternative picture to the rural pioneer town image.



Figure 11: Mic Capes' *Jumper Cables* music video, filmed at City Food Market on Fessenden

² The nascent St. Johns Museum is seeking St. Johnians from all walks of life to do filmed oral histories for their archives. My sense of their mission is that it is more inclusive, and embraces expanding the narrative.

North Portland rap has become known for its distinctive documentary style. In 2005 Roosevelt High School music teacher Jason Margolis used grant money to create a small recording studio on the school's campus, which quickly became popular with the school's aspiring MCs. Lyrics about St. Johns and Columbia Villa were prominent, while African immigrant Egbevado Ananouko rapped about fleeing Togo with his family, and the refugee camp where they lived for five years. The tiny studio was such a success, Margolis recalls students from other high schools trying to sneak in to record. Several years later, local rapper Vinnie Dewayne received a Gates Millenium Scholarship that funded his music education at Columbia College in Chicago. He subsequently became a hero to other kids in St. Johns, who see music as a possible way out of poverty and limited choices (Parks, 2014a). In an interview with *The Oregonian*, rapper Glenn Waco explained, "Some of the songs are from my peers' perspectives, or its allegories that they need to hear. The reason I rep' St. Johns so hard is, it's not really represented. When I tell my story, I'm telling a lot of people's stories. I'm giving a voice to the people who don't know how to articulate their stories" (Parks, 2015b). From 'battle rapper' Illmaculate's single, *Lost Our Soul*,

I was built in Saint John's, before the condominiums though
They putting newer structures up, that they build in a month
The new Columbia's still a villa to us
They want us to move out, turn our buildings to dust
They artificial, shit that ain't real to the touch
I'm caught in the middle
Lower class, piss broke, drinking from a broken glass
Feel like I'm this close, to folding fast



Figure 12: Vinnie Dewayne's *Easy* music video, filmed in north St. Johns

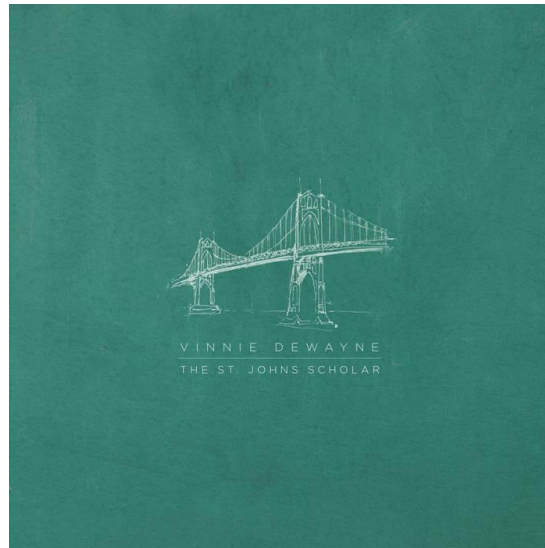


Figure 13: Album cover for *The St. Johns Scholar*

Even with the apparent cultural and a geographic fissure of Fessenden, some basic commonalities exist. Illmaculate mentions St. Johns' 'underdog' image (Parks, 2014c), which is referenced by St. Johnians from all walks of life, and appears to be an intrinsic staple of its identity. Mic Capes said his favorite things about St. Johns are its strong community, and distinctive identity and sense of place, which echoes sentiments of

residents over many decades and from different walks of life (personal interview, April 4, 2018).

Grassroots advocacy and activism

A foundational element of St. Johns' culture is its long history of volunteerism and advocacy. Causes range from opposing facilities like the parole office and toxic waste containment unit, to creating Cathedral Park and the St. Johns Bridge. There are dozens of community organizations, and some of the participants in my research were personally involved with more than ten. From the 1959 plan,

"There is considerable evidence indicating that the people of St. Johns have an exceptionally strong community loyalty. This community cohesiveness has many desirable aspects and is probably partly a result of the previous existence of the area as an independent town. It is apparent that the majority of the residents of the district identify themselves and their activities with St. Johns as a distinguishable community within Portland" (Portland City Planning Commission, 1959, p.12).

This conceptualization of St. Johns as a separate entity is a key aspect underpinning community engagement. After decades of perceived disinvestment and mishandling from the City and County governments, it has become common practice for residents to organize around problems and projects, adopting their own grassroots solutions. Long-time environmental activist Barbara Quinn characterized St. Johns community organizers as tenacious, and activist John Teply said they tend to protect their neighborhood fiercely (personal interviews).

Resident perceptions of the area as a "dumping ground" for Portland's undesirable infrastructure are long-standing, and their genesis is literal: The primary landfill for the city was located just west of St. Johns for over 50 years, until closing in the 1980s. In a 2001 interview, Commissioner Dan Saltzman said,

"It's a great community, but they really have a chip on their shoulder. There's definitely a perception among many neighbors that they've been the dumping ground for all the undesirable activities. I think we've worked very hard to overcome that issue, yet I know it's still a perception that exists out there. But things are changing" (Libby, 2001).

As previously mentioned, the freight traffic issue identified in the 1959 Plan has never been adequately mitigated, despite several planning efforts, including the 2001 St. Johns Truck Strategy. In addition to the traffic and safety issues created by this high volume of trucks, residents also cite the area's poor air quality due to diesel emissions, which includes reports of having to routinely clean diesel particulates off porches and windows. This issue was officially documented and addressed in the 1959 St. Johns Plan, and then again in the St. Johns Truck Strategy of 2001, but change has been slow to come. With the support of Occupy St. Johns and other groups, local activist Donna Cohen succeeded in achieving an official reroute that diverted freight traffic off of the Fessenden/St. Louis corridor, but challenges remain and city commitments have been retracted before. As a result of this track record, relationships with city agencies are cautiously optimistic but skeptical. At the February 2018 SJNA meeting, residents grilled a Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) engineer about the details of the agency's

re-design for Fessenden. The main critique was that the strategy would merely move traffic around, and not remove it from the neighborhood altogether.

Dozens of community groups in St. Johns address everything from tree conservation to houseless resident outreach and support. The St. Johns Center for Opportunity (SJCO) is a prominent player in local community development. The organization began with an economic development mission, under the title St. Johns Main Street with a grant from the national Main Street program. In 2016 it changed its focus to include economic opportunity and mitigating residential displacement for low-income residents. The SJCO also runs the St. Johns Leadership Forum, which brings representatives of these various groups (and other stakeholders) together and strategize about salient issues. As is the case with many neighborhood associations in Portland and elsewhere, attendance from marginalized communities and renters is low, so the leadership forum is partially focused on building a diverse coalition of people that can speak to the needs of all St. Johnians.

The community is also known for the many events it hosts year round, most notably The St. Johns Parade, which is celebrating its 66th year in 2018. The parade brings people to St. Johns from all over the area, and is the longest running event of its kind in the city. For the past twelve years the St. Johns Bizarre has followed the parade, and features live music, food and vendors. The central plaza also hosts the annual 'cake luck', the winter tree lighting, and a seasonal farmer's market - which is managed independently

from the other farmer's markets in Portland. The Cathedral Park Jazz Fest in the summer also brings many people to the area. *The St. Johns Review* free newspaper is the oldest newspaper in Portland, with continuous free circulation since 1904.



Figure 14: St. Johns Parade, 2018; Woman in bridge costume, and St. Johns Ballet Folklorico

4. The 2004 St. Johns/Lombard Plan

Genesis of the Plan

In the late 1990s, Portland Mayor Vera Katz started discussing the need for a St. Johns community plan. The effort began in 2001 after successful lobbying from St. Johns residents, with funding recommended by Katz. The process was expected to take about 18 months, and would entail numerous public stakeholder meetings with planning staff (Leeson, 2001). However, from the beginning, community sentiment ranged from support to skepticism. Newer residents were mainly leading the charge, while long-term community members were leery of supporting the effort. This was largely due to the contentious relationship with the City, and more recently, feelings of discontent from the St. Johns Truck Strategy process, which was divisive in the community and lacked funding to implement.

The focus of the plan from its inception was to guide economic development, and hopefully attract Portland Development Commission funds by securing an Urban Renewal District designation. The community-outreach strategy called for the surrounding neighborhoods to weigh in on the kinds of businesses, services and public places they would like to see (Leeson, 2001). Stakeholders included residents from the neighboring Portsmouth and University Park neighborhoods, in addition to St. Johns. One of the main objectives identified in the planning process was the importance of preserving St. Johns' strong identity and small town feel. Project manager Barry Manning told the *Daily Journal of Commerce* that the neighborhood "has more of a small town feel than most of the other designated town centers in Portland," and an important planning goal was to "create more of a sense of place" (Fehrenbacher, 2002).

He acknowledged the gentrification was a potential issue, and mentioned North Portland's high levels of diversity relative to the rest of the city. He also identified the challenge of engaging immigrants and communities of color in the planning process, but despite these two observations, no displacement mitigation strategies were included in the final plan (ibid).

Controversy in the community

By 2003 the plan was reaching its final stages. The main components of the vision at this stage were (1) to enhance economic vitality by increasing housing density to support local businesses, (2) to make the downtown more pedestrian-oriented and

inviting, which would hopefully also attract residential developments, thus the goals were mutually reinforcing. Once approved, the plan was intended to guide future development in an advisory capacity for the next 20 years. Much like the 1978 plan, building on the neighborhood's character was at the foundation of its approach. According to Portsmouth resident Patt Opdyke, "people speak eloquently of old St. Johns. We don't want to lose it, and we don't want to 'yuppify' it. We want to highlight what it is" (Leeson, 2003). Opdyke was one of the citizen lobbyists who advocated for the plan, and also served on the advisory committee.

However, some community members were skeptical of the efficacy of the City's interventions, and of the necessity for another plan. Bob Leveton, the owner of the Man's Shop and resident for 62 years, raised concerns in context of the 1978 business improvement initiative. He cautioned that the city had "wonderful plans" for the neighborhood, but they only resulted in losing businesses in the end. In his view, St. Johns had "gone through this before, and every time a government agency comes in, it's a huge problem" (Fehrenbacher, 2002). One issue raised by Erik Palmer, of Friends of Cathedral Park (now the Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association), was the push by planners for more growth and density than the community felt was appropriate (Leeson, 2003). There was also concern about substantial neighborhood change that would result in a loss of local character.

Opposition to aspects of the plan started to gain momentum, and members of the community began organizing. One critique was that grassroots organizing was already a part of St. Johns' culture, and the proposed plan didn't take the existing "self-determination" approach into account (Sullivan, 2003a). Though city planner Barry Manning had mentioned the importance of understanding this context (Fehrenbacher, 2002), some residents felt that the Portland Planning Bureau was "trying to push an agenda against the neighborhood's wishes" (Sullivan, 2003a). This led residents and business owners to conduct their own community survey, which included almost 300 respondents. Sharon Nasset, 30-year peninsula resident, characterized the Planning Department's approach as a "cookie-cutter" treatment, and cited opposition to features like bike lanes and curb extensions. St. Johns Boosters President Gary Boehm questioned whether a plan was even needed, mentioning the naturally occurring revitalization of younger families and artists purchasing and renovating older homes (Sullivan, 2003a).

There was also concern about rezoning the industrial area by the Willamette River, and how it would impact existing businesses, like Peninsula Iron Works, which had been in operation for over 100 years (Sullivan, 2003a). The fear was this could trigger a process similar to the loft conversions in New York in the 1980's, where industrial uses were eventually no longer financially feasible as the land valorized (Zukin, 1982). Planning Commissioner and Portland State University professor Ethan Seltzer had a vision of St. Johns emerging as "the region's pre-eminent riverfront town center," while Commissioner Larry Hilderbrand disagreed, stating that the future of the riverfront should

be industrial, given the city's lack of industrial sites (Sullivan, 2003b). Manning advocated for a flexible strategy that would allow for both uses, in what he characterized as a "market-driven approach."

North Portland residents opposed to the plan hosted a Stop the Lombard Plan meeting, which drew about 130 peninsula residents. Among their primary concerns were the potential of curb extensions and bike lanes to increase traffic on Lombard. Additionally, they alleged that outreach had been inadequate, citing the results of a door-to-door canvass that revealed many residents were not aware of the planning efforts at all. As the plan moved closer to being approved in 2004, the situation became increasingly contentious. An emerging critique was the emphasis on bringing more businesses that would appeal to young professionals, like boutiques and coffee shops. According to neighborhood activist Sharon Nasset, "we're not going out for the coffees and lattes like the others when you're making six or seven bucks before taxes, we would rather have the jobs" (Mitchell, 2004). Attendees at the meetings continued to express their opposition on the grounds that they had not been notified, and that the proposed changes were too dramatic. The group called for revisiting the process with a higher level of community involvement in light of increased awareness (Mitchell, 2004). Despite these concerns, the plan was formally adopted by City Council on May 26, 2004.

5. Current issues in St. Johns

In addition to the ongoing environmental advocacy previously mentioned, there are two overarching issues facing St. Johns today: socioeconomic change and displacement; and a threat to local identity and character. They are intertwined but also divergent, and occasionally at odds.

Neighborhood change and displacement

Like the rest of Portland in the past decade, property values in St. Johns have increased substantially. This has resulted in a shifting socioeconomic character, and residents have expressed anxiety that St. Johns will be invaded by sleek 'new Portland' developments and lose its sense of place. This concern is not exclusive to St. Johns, but the stakes are particularly high given the importance of its identity and independent spirit to the community. One participant in my research characterized the rate of change in St. Johns as "metastatic in nature—a brusque destruction of the neighborhood narrative replaced by a out of state developer's narrative of no place - a gated community in terms of affordability, filled with people who have no sense of place either seemingly."

Though the pace of change has seemingly increased in recent years, St. Johns has been on verge of 'turning' for some time. A 1993 article in the *Business Journal of Portland* touted the neighborhood as an increasingly desirable destination for young couples moving into the city and purchasing their first homes. Among the amenities attractive to suburbanites, were the "'small-town' downtown that offers everything from a place to get your windshield repaired to a full service drugstore; neighborhoods of

attractive older homes with sizeable yards; and a feeling of 'neighborhood' that expresses itself in friendly sidewalk greetings and yearly community celebrations" (Waltz, 1993). In other words, St. Johns was already equipped with all of the desirable elements of New Urbanism and 'complete communities' that are currently en vogue in urban design and planning. Real estate agent Nancy Farrell enthusiastically noted that many landlords were selling their rental properties as the market valorized, resulting in an increase in owner-occupied homes. The impact on renters was not mentioned. By the early 1990's single-family home developers were also starting to become active in the area, attracted to the cheap lots that allowed them to sell brand new homes for prices well under the typical suburban development. Developer Robin Coleman mentioned that buyers were concerned about crime, but the price was low enough to assuage their fears (Waltz, 1993).

The first large development to come the neighborhood in the wake of the 2004 St. Johns Lombard Plan was the Matthew Frank Condos. Developer Stearns Marnella Communities tore down a Safeway store in the center of the neighborhood to construct a 19 building, 111-unit condominium complex, which was a departure for this section of St. Johns. Principal Nick Stearns cited the instrumental nature of the St. Johns plan in their decision to purchase and develop the property (Sullivan, 2005). Flats on the first floor were priced in the \$250,000 range, which was a steep increase from the maximum home price of about \$90,000 ten years prior. They were completed between 2006-2007, and long-time north St. Johns and North Portland resident Mic Capes describes this development as the beginning of perceptible neighborhood change in St. Johns (personal

communication, April 4, 2018). Meanwhile in Cathedral Park, developers were taking advantage of the zoning change from Industrial to Mixed Use with several residential projects in the works, including a 80-unit condominium project and a series of live-work spaces (Sullivan, 2005).

In a 2005 interview with *The Oregonian* newspaper, former St. Johns Neighborhood Association chair Robin Plance expressed support for the increase in household incomes and "types of people" (Beaven, 2005). However, he also expressed concern that too many upscale developments could threaten the existence of the mixed-income, culturally diverse community, mentioning the Pearl District as an example of homogeneity he would like to avoid in St. Johns. The following year, one of the St. Johns business district's most vocal advocates, Gary Boehm, was priced out of the neighborhood when his apartment was converted to condominiums and he was unable to afford rent anywhere else in the neighborhood. Boehm had been active in re-shaping St. Johns' image since he became the leader of the St. Johns Boosters in 1996, and claimed credit for 45 new storefronts between 2000 and 2006. He also helped bring in over \$400,000 in grants, and was recognized with the Spirit of Portland award in 2003. Of recent developments Boehm opined, "some people say I'm responsible for what happened. I never imagined this" (Giarelli, 2006). In 2006 alone, 123 rental units were lost to condominium conversions. While he was still supportive of the overall changes he had worked so diligently towards, he acknowledged the effect of "displacing a certain segment of the community," and the need to "recognize a time when people need housing" (ibid).

The booster machine continued to roll on, full steam ahead. A 2007 *Oregonian* article entitled "St. Johns has retro mojo that attracts newcomers" touted the arrival of a Starbucks, independent bookstore and vegan restaurant, as signs that the neighborhood was "shedding its blue-collar past" to become "one of Portland's 'hot' neighborhoods" (Beaven, 2007). St. Johns was one of three neighborhood applicants to be awarded a Main Street Grant in 2010 from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Portland Development Commission, as part of the ongoing revitalization effort on Lombard (Fitzgibbon & Koffman, 2010). This resulted in the creation of neighborhood non-profit, St. Johns Main Street.

Residential development in the early 2010s was focused exclusively on market-rate multi- and single-family housing. Real estate agents and developers touted the area as an investment opportunity, that is "just on the corner of turning, so it's a pretty good place to buy into in hopes that you're going to gain value pretty quickly over the next few years." Jennifer Nye, an architect working on a project in Cathedral Park cited the benefit of the development bringing diversity to a "fairly low income area" (Fehrenbacher, 2012a). The details of these benefits were not specified. The 165 unit Marvel 29 apartment complex was completed in 2014, and was possibly the largest multi-family development to be built in St. Johns in recent decades. It generated neighborhood controversy over its size and prominent placement, adjacent to the St. Johns Bridge. Architect Jennifer Jenkins of Ankrom Moisan Associated Architects described the target demographic as "creative,

artistic and design oriented...young professionals that want to live in a building that has quality in design...with (access to) downtown amenities, but in an area that has a really strong sense of community and a strong sense of neighborhood" (Fehrenbacher, 2012b).

These images of revitalization and opportunity contrast with socioeconomic realities of St. Johns' low-income residents, indicated by the 75 to 80 percent of Roosevelt High School students who were living below the poverty line (Binder, 2007). In 2009 78 percent of the dwindling student body was on free or reduced lunch, 35 percent didn't list a Social Security number, and as many as 140 students were classified as homeless (Duin, 2009). In 2010 the dropout rate at Roosevelt was still three times higher than other Portland high schools, (Melton, 2010) and it served the highest concentration of low-income and Latino students of any high school in Oregon (Hammond, 2010). It was also the lowest performing in the state. The school was presented with a choice: either close, drastically reduce staff, or accept federal grant money as part of President Obama's school improvement fund, and be evaluated based on performance scores. They choose the latter option, and were awarded a grant of \$7.7 million over the course of three years to improve outcomes (ibid).

With housing costs skyrocketing all over the city, St. Johns remains one of the only neighborhoods that is still moderately affordable. Even so, the average cost to purchase a home in St. Johns increased by 51.9 percent between 2011 and 2015, which is higher than the citywide average of 44 percent. Rents went up 8.5 percent between 2015 and 2016,

with a huge spike in rent for a studio apartment (51.7 percent), which can probably be attributed to new market rate multi-family developments, like Marvel 29. According to the 2016 *State of Housing in Portland* report, only average White and Asian households would be able to afford any size of rental housing in St. Johns without being cost-burdened, while Latino households would be able to afford one bedroom units only without being cost burdened, and Native American and Black households wouldn't be able to afford any size without cost burden.

Though the 2004 plan does broadly address housing needs, it is somewhat vague about defining them. The mission statement on housing reads, "provide for a broad range of well-designed and compatible housing to accommodate local and regional housing needs, and to support development of vital town center and main street commercial areas" (p. 60). There is mention of working with community development corporations, but the term "affordable housing" is never actually mentioned, nor is there any kind of guideline for affordability. The report does identify a trend of rising rents in St. Johns, but points out that it still lags behind citywide levels.

Figure 7: Median Gross Monthly Rents, 1980 to 2000

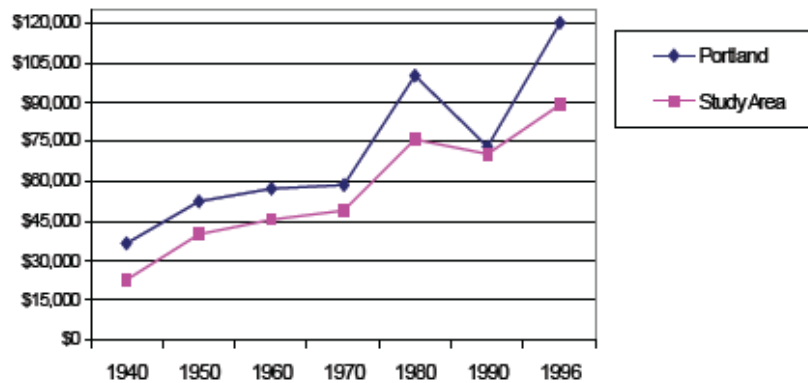


Figure 15: Median Gross Monthly Rents, 1980 to 2000 (From the 2004 St. Johns Lombard Plan)

North St. Johns is not mentioned other than in the context of crime, and the safety issues presented by freight truck traffic on Fessenden. This most likely reflects the demographics of the residents involved in crafting the plan. The closest it comes to addressing the need for affordable housing options is, "the planning effort should ensure the potential for a wide range of housing types that are suitable for residents of all ages, income levels and abilities" (p. 88). Unlike the 1978 plan's suggestion of creating affordable housing in mixed use developments downtown, there is no detailed plan for this achieving goal. The housing section simply closes with the conclusion, "lower rents and prices may make the area less desirable for housing developers" (p. 88). As it would turn out, nothing could be further from the truth.

As a result, that area's most vulnerable residents have experienced increasing residential displacement in recent years. This includes homeowners, but is mainly in the form of unsustainable rent increases and mass no-cause evictions as investors purchase

buildings that had traditionally been affordable, and raise rents to appeal to a different demographic. This type of eviction - technically a lease termination - is legally permitted under the State of Oregon's conservative Landlord-Tenant laws. The most notable recent case was the 72 unit Titan Manor Apartments on Fessenden. After a consortium of out of state buyers purchased the property, they served evictions notices to all of the households in the complex in late 2016. Residents are mostly low-income and people of color, and including many children who attend Cesar Chavez Elementary. The SJNA and other community groups signed a formal letter of support for the residents of the complex, who were successful in fighting the evictions. This was likely due to the combination of an effective media campaign, and the timing of Portland's new Tenant Relocation Ordinance.³ A year later, in December of 2017, they received another round of mass evictions. Nine of the former residents have filed a lawsuit against the owner, alleging that the evictions were retaliatory, in response to tenant organizing and a proposed rent withholding until the over 400 violations on file were addressed (Quinn, 2018). The complex has since been refurbished and re-branded as The Melrose.

By 2017, 73 percent of Roosevelt's seniors graduated on time out of a class size of 274 (Portland Public Schools, 2018), compared to 29 percent in 2009 (Hammond, 2010), suggesting vast improvements in educational performance. Meanwhile, students have mobilized around the issue of gentrification and displacement as it affects the Roosevelt

³ The ordinance stipulates that a specific amount of money must be paid to tenants who receive a no-cause termination notice or a rent increase of 10 percent or greater. Is it the first of its kind in Portland, and was met with major opposition from landlords.

community. In their list of demands to principal Filip Hristic, they asked for weekly student council meetings, culturally relevant curriculum that highlights Black history, and hiring staff that better represents the racial and ethnic composition of the student body. Since many of Roosevelt's low-income students tend to live with a high level of housing insecurity due to inadequate renter protections in Oregon, their future as students in gentrifying St. Johns is precarious. According to the *Portland Mercury* and other sources, many households displaced from St. Johns move to Vancouver, WA or Gresham, which would place them out of Portland's school district. They are also petitioning for a solution to the district's policy of requiring students to pay tuition if they chose to continue attending the school after moving to another district. Students at a three hour protest held signs that read, "Are we the next Alberta?" and "What will happen to our diversity when we are gone?" (Prado, 2018).

In addition to the loss of 'naturally occurring affordable housing' through investment-driven evictions, new development is contributing very little to affordable housing stock. Of an estimated 400 units in some stage of development in the neighborhood (Next Portland, 2018), the Housing Bureau's website lists only 10 income-based units in the pipeline. A studio apartment in the newly completed Union at St. Johns leases for \$1,270 (Craigslist, 2018), and costs are comparable in other new construction. Concern about the lack of racial, ethnic and economic diversity has been voiced frequently on various forums, including at SJNA meetings and on the Facebook

page, and creating affordable housing has been a priority of the SJCO, former BPS Community Liaison Leslie Lum, and the SJNA for the past several years.

Students from Portland State University's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program created an affordable housing strategy for St. Johns in 2017. In their community focus groups, they found that 77.4 percent of renters felt their housing costs were too high, while only 9.5 percent of homeowners faced that challenge. Furthermore, 84 percent of renters spend more than one third of their income on rent, which means they are considered cost-burdened. Respondents also indicated that even units designated 'affordable' are not accessible to many low-income households (Singh, Michel, Oswill, Rousseau & Salzmann, 2017). For reference, a single person making \$41,850 a year would be at 80 percent AMI, which is the threshold for Regulatory Option 1 in Portland's Inclusionary Housing ordinance, and a common affordable housing metric. By contrast, a person in Portland working full time for minimum wage of \$12 an hour would be making about \$25,000 annually before taxes.

Though there has been resistance to building more affordable housing in St. Johns in the past, the study found 94 percent of respondents in support of new affordable units. Of course this may be partially attributed to self-selection bias in attendees of an affordable housing focus group, but it may also indicate a new willingness to embrace these types of projects. The study concluded with the following goals: strengthen the neighborhood's ability to organize around housing affordability; stop the displacement of

renters; ensure new housing development meets the range of needs of existing residents; and increase homeownership opportunities for renters (Singh, Michel, Oswill, Rousseau & Salzman, 2017). It is unknown if any of their strategy recommendations - such as a 'person of color outreach person' for the SJNA - have been implemented. However, there is a St. Johns Affordable Housing Committee, led by Lindsay Jensen of St. Johns Center for Opportunity. Their mission is to strategize and facilitate bringing affordable housing projects to the neighborhood.

Change has been slow and incremental in St. Johns, but it has accelerated in recent years and the effects are being felt strongly throughout the community. Positive aspects like Roosevelt's miraculous turnaround, increased funding for community centers, and funding for traffic improvement projects are bittersweet when they come alongside mass evictions. Managing and guiding this change through neighborhood advocacy and grassroots organizing is one of the biggest challenges the community faces today. The future of St. Johns - and its ability to retain the diversity and identity that makes it distinctive - may depend on the ability to successfully build strong coalitions across differences.

Threat to neighborhood character and identity

Some of the larger developments in recent years are not perceived by the community as aligned with St. Johns' values and character. Some residents have used the term “predatory development” to describe projects that try to get as many units as

possible built, with no affordable housing and little parking space, or attention to aesthetic coherence with their surroundings. This describes the idea of a developer 'cashing in' on a housing market and/or neighborhood appeal, and potentially straining local infrastructure without offering anything to the community in return. An investor brochure for the proposed Burlington North development on Steelhammer site was passed around at a Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association meeting last winter, and was met with some skepticism. The brochure touts the city's robust agglomeration of skilled workers and "quality firms" (i.e. higher-end renters), amenities of the business district, and St. Johns' charming "city within a city" character. It also mentions Portland's current housing shortage as a selling point, and the developer's deft acquisition of the project entitlement before the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance took effect.⁴

Another concern that has been mentioned frequently on various forums, is the idea of the 'sameness' of these new developments, and how it will erode St. Johns' distinctive sense of place. The Union at St. Johns was the most recent controversial development to come to the neighborhood, and diverging ideas within the community on how to approach it created a deep rift. The project was a mixed-use development at the eastern gateway to downtown, with over 100 units of market-rate housing and 20,000 square feet of retail. Though there was general opposition to the project itself, the heart of the struggle was the

⁴ The ordinance went into effect at the beginning of 2017, and mandates a percentages of income-based affordable units for projects with 20 or more units. There are several options to choose from.

over the proposed elimination of the downtown business district's 'welcome island,' which was created under the 1978 plan.

The landscaping feature, known colloquially as Ivy Island, was beloved by some St. Johnians, but regarded with indifference or antipathy by others. Some bemoaned the loss of the mature locust trees and landscaping on the island, which they felt was an important part of St. Johns' built environment, while others argued it was a vestige of an auto centric era in urban design, and represented a major traffic hazard. The development proposal included a street vacation that had been requested by PBOT, which entailed eliminating the eponymous island and the adjacent slip lane to build a safer intersection. In return for paying for the redesign and traffic signals, developer Farid Boulari would receive land in the public right of way to build on, including part of Ivy Island. The small public corner plaza would likely host tables for restaurants and cafes, making it substantially different in use and design than the space it was replacing.



Figure 16: Ivy Island Site (REP). “I took two photos of where “Ivy Island” used to be. It was the unofficial entrance to the downtown core of St. Johns. It had 9 tall trees on an island welcoming you to the downtown area. It was the first time I ever really protested anything. I stood on the island every Saturday for quite some time. I recruited people who were like minded to join our belief that the island should stay but be made safer. Sadly the city disagreed with many neighbors in St. Johns and gave the land away to a developer who in turn made traffic “improvements”. The road stayed closed for over a year making it difficult for easy access to the core of downtown St. Johns, many small businesses closed during this time, just as we predicted would happen.”

The conflict over the street vacation unfolded on several scales. The physical impacts of the street realignment included: losing tree canopy and plants; potential increase in traffic and pollution; relocation of the iconic sign; obscured sightline into the commercial district; controversial redesign of the neighborhood gateway by a private developer; and closed roads, which could impact local businesses. On an ideological level, Save Ivy Island came to symbolize the struggle for local control and community anxiety over neighborhood change and preservation of character. The group’s website argues that the 2004 St. Johns Lombard Plan was being used as justification for this

development and street vacation, when in actuality it contradicted the “spirit” of the plan. It also mentions the concern that the street vacation appeared to be a “done deal” without opportunity for meaningful community input (Teply, 2015).

Conversely, the SJNA, the SJCO and other community members felt that the intersection was dangerous, and that having the developer pay for these public works was a benefit. They also worried that the fracas derailed a conversation with Boulari about including affordable housing, which they felt was a more pressing priority. The Save Ivy Island contingent countered that there were other ways to improve safety without giving away public land, and that affordable housing was never on the table. SJNA chair Shamus Lynsky expressed frustration at what he perceived to be the conflation of saving Ivy Island with opposition to neighborhood change, which overstepped the bounds of what the community can reasonably expect to control. What became clear in the aftermath is though both sides care deeply about the neighborhood, they may have different visions of what its future looks like, and/or how to achieve results.

The St. Johns Lombard Plan does include a substantial section devoted to the role of the built environment’s distinctive character and contribution to the area’s sense of place. The planning process included hundreds of meetings with residents, who overwhelmingly “expressed their desire to maintain the small town character of St. Johns” (St. Johns Lombard Plan, p.48). In response, *Policy I: Land Use and Placemaking* calls for accommodation of “growth and change in a manner that fosters the area’s sense of place

as a small town and main street within the city...(taking) advantage of its unique setting near the Willamette River, and (supporting) development of vital commercial areas” (ibid, p.46). To achieve this outcome the plan established a design overlay zone that stretches through much of downtown, with the intention of guiding the design review process.

In recent years these guidelines have not been entirely effective at guiding development in a manner commensurate with community wishes. A recent example was the December 2017 design review appeal for the 30 unit mixed-use Central Lofts development, which is to be constructed on the current site of the Central Hotel, adjacent to the plaza. The appeal was led by a coalition of neighborhood groups, including the St. Johns Neighborhood Association, the St. Johns Boosters, and the St. Johns Center for Opportunity. At a St. Johns Neighborhood Association Land Use meeting prior to the hearing, one member made remarked that the community was “united across party lines” in opposition to the design ⁵, and they would use every possible angle available to them in their appeal. At the hearing, the stakeholder group argued that the design failed to apply characteristics and traditions of the St. Johns/Lombard Plan, and that it diverged too much from the area's architectural vocabulary established in the plan. They had several detailed examples to support each claim.

⁵ In reference to the Ivy Island controversy surrounding the Union project, which was divisive among neighborhood advocates.

Though the stakeholder group included several local design professionals, who presented a thorough argument grounded in the language of the plan, all aspects of the appeal were rejected. The project architect countered that St. Johns has an eclectic mix of styles, and the plan calls for continuing this trend. The development team interpreted that as meaning that design should be of the time period when it is built, which is to say it is essentially a meaningless guideline. In response to concerns that the building is too large, they pointed out that there are already larger projects, such as Marvel 29, and the recently completed Union at St. Johns (which will be discussed in a later section). This Pandora's box effect - where one outlier project sets a precedent for buildings of similar scale - did not sit well with the stakeholder group. At the conclusion of the hearing, Design Commissioner Don Vallaster stated that the guidelines are nebulous enough that either side can use them to support their points (Hohlfeld, 2017).

Community response to the project on the active St. Johns Facebook page has been largely negative, with many residents expressing anxiety about the changing character of their neighborhood, and disbelief at what they perceive as a failure of the planning process to protect their interests. Leadership in the St. Johns and Cathedral Park Neighborhood Associations are currently focusing on how this process that be improved, so the community can have more meaningful roles in steering future developments in the neighborhood. Part of this necessitates an improved system for

communicating with residents about impending projects, and creating an opportunity to “get ahead” of the process, rather than interjecting feedback in a more reactionary way, when plans have already been finalized.



Figure 17: Central Lofts rendering, Jones Architecture



Figure 18: Facebook comments, April, 2018

CHAPTER III: Theoretical Framework

My research is situated in body of scholarship that deals with sense of place and place attachment. The strength of this field is its multidisciplinary nature, incorporating Environmental Psychology, Sociology, Geography, Anthropology, Urban Planning, and more. The literature looks at the person-place relationship from a variety of angles, as mediated through different variables. My research specifically hones in on place meanings as a foundation of place attachment for individuals, and on a community level. This line of inquiry focuses on socially produced meanings, and how they relate to the built environment and social fabric.

I will begin this discussion of my theoretical framework with what brought me to this literature and case selection, a general overview of the field, some context, and then the specific concepts and scholarship I will be drawing from in my research and analysis. As there are many different strands in this literature, I will only be addressing theory relevant to my own research.

1. Overview

What draws me to concepts like place attachment and place identity is a longtime interest in humans' relationship to their environment: In particular, the role that aspects like culture, collective identity, ancestral roots, and personal biography play. Why do some places seem to inspire little allegiance, while others have communities who are willing to fight - in some cases to the death - to defend them? Why do some locales have

such a palpable atmosphere, while others just feel like space without meaning? Sense of place literature strives to answer these questions by studying the complex, multifaceted nature of the person-place relationship, and of the essence of the place itself. It offers us a way to understand how people become attached to their environment; what are the objects or locuses of the attachment, why are they significant, and what are the processes through which the bonds are formed? Research in this field can focus on the psychology and substance of individual place attachment, or it can try to isolate specific predictive variables that are of interest for anticipating place-protective action, in the context of a proposed development. It can also reveal the ways in which many meanings that underpin attachment are socially created and reproduced, comprising a collectively experienced sense of place.

Understanding 'what kind of place this is', and who the 'us' of community is, is intrinsic to understanding attachment on both an individual and collective level. In a place with a strong narrative and identity like St. Johns, this dimension is especially important. The area has been experiencing a lot of change over the past ten years, and residents have expressed general anxiety about loss of character. The community is known for engaging in spirited, passionate debates and discussions, and change is one of the most popular topics, whether in a public forum, or on the 15,000 member Facebook group.

What is clear is that many people who live in St. Johns feel very strongly about it, and care deeply about its future, but without being able to agree on some fundamental

values, achieving desirable outcomes is challenging. Research on sense of place and underpinnings of place attachments can reveal a foundation of common identity and priorities to work from. By understanding the constituent parts of place attachments and meanings, residents, planners and policy makers will hopefully have a clearer idea of how to holistically preserve places. Additionally, there are many residents who love St. Johns and voice their opinions freely on social media, but don't participate in local organizations or advocacy. Mobilizing these people to become more engaged is another potential outcome of this type of research.

2. Sense of place and other place literature

The foundations of this early discourse were laid by human geographers of the 1970s, most notably Tuan, Buttimer, Relph and Seamon, whose writing explored the difference between the concepts of *space* and *place*. They were inspired by the philosophy of Heidegger, whose conception of dwelling “involves the process by which a place in which we exist becomes a personal world and home” (Seamon and Mugerauer; 1985, p.8). This new construct was coined *sense of place*, and encompasses a holistic approach to the person-place relationship, grounded in phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenological epistemology entails the search for cohesive whole systems; webs of meaning that constitute the "underlying order of things, processes and experiences". (ibid, p. 9) Furthermore, Hummon asserted that sense of place is a produced by the dual and intersecting processes of cognition and affect. (Hummon, 1992)

This way of looking at place was in direct response to the suburbanization, urban renewal, homogenization of space, and cultural erasure of the 1950s and 60s. According to Relph (2008) and others, the idea of place as inseparable from being clashed directly with the rationality of planning, which treated places as "marginal to goals of profit and efficiency." (p. 42) Relph also juxtaposed the "placelessness" of modernity with the "authenticity" of traditional communities, which would later be criticized by critical Marxist geographers as essentializing and parochial. Massey (1994) and Rose (1995) agreed about the reproduction of power dynamics in essentialized local identities, but argued that sense of place is still a valuable attribute if approached in a nuanced way. They suggest a critical examination of the dominant narrative, and a progressive approach to sense of place that considers externalities and multiple perspectives.

Intrinsic to sense of place discourse is the way in which "places are constructed in our memories and affectations through repeated encounters and complex associations." (Relph; 1985, p. 26) These scholars wanted to understand not just *how* people experience place as distinctive from space, but *why*. This early literature focused mainly on long-term users, and emphasized the importance of narrative memories and habitual use. Later scholarship would reveal that it is also possible for even a visitor to experience sense of place, though the meanings and attachments differ. The importance of social interactions and collective meaning making is also key. Places and their physical components are intrinsically bound up with, and inseparable from, the social interactions and relationships that take place within them. For this reason, Buttimer (1980) cautioned

against the "outsider trap" when assessing the qualities of a particular place. She argued that even a generic convenience store or Walmart could have deep place meanings and attachments for local residents, though it may seem counterintuitive to a researcher. Due to the importance of narrative memory and biographical associations, the idea of place "implies a conflation of space and time such that attachment to a particular place may also represent attachment to a particular time" (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992, p. 142). These two dimensions are tied together in the way that informs place meanings and attachment through experience over time, and also marks the passage of time through changes in the physical environment.

This literature intersects with several other discourses that seek to explain the nature of place. One is the "urban culturist" perspective in sociology, which explores urban environments through their lived culture, rather than merely their, "economic or political 'structures' and demographic profiles" (Borer, 2006, p. 174). In response to the structuralism of the Chicago School, Marxian theory, and the LA School, this approach rejects the notion that culture is simply a byproduct of systemic factors. It seeks insight into the ways people "use places as part of their cultural repertoires" (ibid, p. 174), and how those repertoires in turn shape the built and social environment in the city. Like sense of place literature, it is concerned with the symbolic dimension of people-place relationships, and "the ways that persons invest places with meaning and value in order to make sense of their world" (ibid, p. 186). Of the six domains of research within the urban

cultural perspective, those most closely related to sense of place are: (3) Place-based myths, narratives, and collective memories; (4) Sentiment and meaning of, and for places.

3. Place attachment, identity and meaning

The evolution of the sense of place literature has resulted in various terms and models that attempt to explain these relationships, and in some cases to facilitate their operationalization for positivist research. Place attachment, place meaning, place identity, settlement attachment, place satisfaction, and community sentiment are just a few of the most prominent. According to Altman and Low (1992), place attachment is an integrating concept that involves patterns of: attachments (affect, cognition and practice); places that vary in scale, specificity and tangibility; different actors (individuals, groups, cultures); and different social relationships. However, different disciplines and scholars tend to use terms in varying ways, with different causal relationships to the other terms. For example, the term place attachment has been used as both an overarching construct as elucidated above, *and* as a single facet of place relationships.

Later scholars in the sense of place realm have attempted to break this holistic concept down into constituent parts, resulting in a myriad of typologies and models, and some epistemological debate about positivist vs. phenomenological approach. This has lead to an alleged lack of coherence in the literature, which has been the subject of discourse in recent years (Lewicka, 2008, 2010; Patterson & Williams, 2005; Wirth et al; 2016). Patterson and Williams (2005) argue that the issue isn't so much the failure to

agree on universal definitions and terms, so much as to understand and accept that the field is informed by multiple research traditions. The call for clearer definitions applies more to a positivist epistemology and the need for a testable hypothesis, while phenomenologists "eschew deriving generalizations from hypothesis testing" (ibid, p. 13). Additionally, much of the debate "has to do with how one understands the difference between characterizing relationships to various properties of the environment versus relationships to specific holistic entities that we think of as places" (Williams, 2014, p. 91).

What Williams means is that positivist scholarship tends to focus on people as organisms responding to stimuli, and on measuring attachment by identifying predictors, rather than looking at the bigger picture and acknowledging its considerable complexity (Altman and Low, 1992; Seamon, 2014; Scannell and Gifford, 2014). Both of these approaches have something to offer our understanding of place relationships, but my research will focus more on the holistic approach, while paying attention to possible correlations with some of the most commonly examined variables.

4. Defining terms and how they are related

At its most elemental, place attachment can be defined as an affective bond between people and places (Altman & Low, 1992). Environmental psychologist Setha Low deepens the definition, describing it as "the symbolic relationship formed by people giving culturally shared emotional/affective meanings to a particular space or piece of

land that provides the basis for the individual's and group's understanding of a relation to the environment" (p. 165). The emphasis in this definition, which comes from a cultural perspective, is on the *shared* meanings of place. Though attachment may be experienced on an individual level, the meanings that constitute it are mostly socially produced. For example, Stedman et al's (2002) study of property owners in Vilas County, WI revealed the importance of symbolic meanings to both place attachment and place satisfaction. In this conceptualization, "symbolic place meanings can be translated into cognitions and beliefs about place, which are the building blocks of attitude" (ibid, p. 564).

Scannell and Gifford's (2010) 'tripartite' framework synthesis identifies three dimensions in the literature: (1) Person - individually and collectively determined meanings; (2) Psychological - affective, cognitive, behavioral; (3) Place - spatial level, specificity, prominence of social or physical aspects (p. 62). While there is a considerable amount of overlap in these strands, the causal relationship Stedman suggests corresponds to the psychological dimension of this model. Within this dimension, the authors suggest a path of: cognition (meaning/identity), affect (attachment or detachment), and behavior (civic engagement or lack thereof).

Beidler & Morrison (2016) suggest the following four dimensions for creating a foundation relevant to the planning and design professions: (1) The Self - Relationship to place can be measured in terms of place identity, place dependence, and place attachment; (2) The Environment - Tangible elements like nature and historic landmarks; (3) Social

interaction - The importance of lived experience, where "the construction of place relies heavily on the meaning that unknown space acquires through the daily routines of its inhabitants"; (4) Time - The impact on the amount of time spent on sense of place (ibid, p. 208).

Place attachment scholarship has also sought to identify different *types* of attachment, arising from different circumstances. Hummon's (1992) concept of "rootedness" applies to individuals who "experience a strong, local sense of home and are emotionally attached to their local area" (ibid, p. 263). He identifies two types of rootedness that differ in the level of self-consciousness; everyday and ideological. Ideological rootedness entails a high level of satisfaction and attachment, combined with a highly articulated sense of place, and self-conscious identification with the community. This is usually found in mobile residents who have lived in more than one place. Everyday rootedness is more taken for granted, where the attachment to the community and local is mainly comprised of biographical associations and practical place dependence. This is more typically found with individuals who have resided in a local for most or all of their life.

Ideological rootedness has some parallels to the idea of "settlement-identity" (Feldman, 1996), where people identify more with a *type* of place than a specific place. For example, someone might choose to move to St. Johns because it has a "small town feel" similar to where they grew up. This may promote a sense of continuity for mobile

persons, and allow them to quickly develop emotional bonds to their new home place (Gustafson, 2014). According to Gustafson, "those who are mobile may perceive places as meaningful for different reasons, and develop different types of attachment, than longtime residents" (p. 38). This concept circles back to the 'everyday' versus 'ideological' rootedness distinction.

5. Dimensions and variables

The place literature has often explored these constructs and relationships by attempting to isolate predictive variables, either through quantitative surveys, qualitative narratives, or mixed-methods. The most common variables include: length of tenure, age, social status and education, home ownership, size of community, having children, social ties, and mobility (Lewicka, 2010). Of these, length of tenure and social ties (which are often a product of the former) have been found to be the most consistently predictive of attachment. Stedman (2006) takes this one step further by differentiating type of attachment depending on type of user. He theorizes that longer-term residents' attachment will be more based on the social dimension, whereas newer and part-time users will be more focused on environmental amenities (see also, Scannell and Gifford, 2010b).

Bailey et al's (2016) "life-place trajectory" model looks at residential patterns and how they relate to place attachment. Based on their study of residents in rural UK, they propose the following typologies: (1) Long-term residence in one place, which tends to be deep but unselfconscious (similar to everyday rootedness); (2) Return to the "home

place," which entails an unreflective bond, low involvement in community, but interest in history and goings-on; (3) Residential mobility with continuity in settlement type; (4) Residential mobility with discontinuity in settlement type (associated with negative place perceptions); (5) High residential mobility, with virtually no attachment. Their research goes on to draw correlations between these types, and reactions to local infrastructure proposals, or other major public works with significant environmental impacts.

The role of time in attachment is theorized to be significant, because the past is connected to the present through the vehicle of place (Lewicka, 2014). This can take the form of an individual's biographical connection, a shared history, or even taking interest in the history of a new place of residence. In her 2008 study on public history and collective memory in Ukrainian and Polish towns that changed nationalities after WWII, Lewicka found that "historical sites create a sense of continuity with the past, embody the group traditions, and facilitate place attachment" (p. 211). These place meanings held in the built environment are the reason tourists visit the hotel where Lincoln died, important sites from antiquity, or the music studio where Buddy Holly recorded his hits. Interest in the history of a new place of residence is a "means through which a newcomer may feel a part of the place's history" (Lewicka, 2014, p. 54). Lewicka refers to this type of temporal place relationship as 'declarative semantic memory', wherein people connect to place through this shared narrative (ibid, p. 54).

On an individual level, when a resident has memories embedded in place it results in 'autobiographical insidedness' (Rowles, 1990). This manifests in the type of nostalgic anecdotes that most long-time residents can share while taking a walk through their neighborhood. Buildings, businesses, street corners, trees, and virtually anything else in the landscape can be a vehicle for memory. These recollections and associations, which Lewicka calls "'episodic declarative memory' (Lewicka, 2014, pp. 52-53) are important for personal identity and continuity. They fuse time and space together, creating place meanings that underpin attachment.

'Procedural memory' is another way people bond to place through the dimension of time. In this instance, places acquire meaning through repeated use (Lewicka, 2014). This is theorized to be one of the reasons residential duration is thought to be so intrinsic to the strength of place attachment. Sociologist Cathrine Degnen's (2016) ethnographic work in a former coal village in the UK reveals how long-time residents' relation to place is heavily steeped in 'embodied affordances'. This type of physical memory includes repeated actions like climbing certain staircases, or the preferred route to a friend's home. The idea of 'place ballet' (Seamon, 1979) echoes this concept. With place ballet, an individual's repeated use of a space over time results in attachment that may be "sustained by regular environmental actions and routines that, in turn, are maintained and strengthened through that attachment" (Seamon, 2014, p.13). Degnen finds that the "unconscious inclusion of such detail in everyday stories stems from the profound familiarity people come to have with their surroundings" (Degnen, 2016, p. 1,658) This

type of place relationship is akin to everyday rootedness, and is less likely to be self-conscious in nature.

Setha Low (1992) examines the role played by cultural place meanings, proposing six typologies of socio-cultural place attachment, based on the "symbolic linkage of people and land" (p. 166): (1) Genealogical link through family; (2) link through loss of land or destruction of community; (3) Economic link through ownership or politics; (4) cosmological link through spiritual or mythological significance; (5) link as pilgrimage or cultural site; (6) narrative link through storytelling and place naming. This discourse turns away from the individual experiences usually prioritized in environmental psychology, and toward socially produced meaning as a foundation of attachment. While these typologies are useful, they notably leave out the role of amenities and utility, which can also produce deep attachments.

Sociologist Jennifer Cross (2015) proposes a set of attachment *process* typologies based on Low's meaning typologies. In this case, 'process' and 'meaning' serve the same causal function, which is the *cognition* that leads to affect (attachment). Cross approaches the topic through an interactional framework, which is an area of sociological theory that explains place meanings as constituted by the social interactions that have taken place in the past, and are likely to take place again (Couch, 1984). This shifts the emphasis away from the individual, and towards the role of social fabric and relationships.

These seven processes create place attachment through "the intersection of experience and meaning" (Cross, 2015, p. 501), by interacting at the individual, group and cultural level. The processes are: (1) Sensory (embodied, physical); (2) narrative (place identity, imaginary); (3) historical (personal experiences or family history); (4) spiritual (deep sense of belonging); (5) ideological (moral or ethical commitment); (6) commodifying (place is assessed as best able to meet individual's and preferences); (7) material dependence (reliance on material features). These typologies incorporate both cultural place meanings identified by Low, and practical place meanings more typically explored by environmental psychologists.

6. Community place attachment and 'sense of community'

For the purposes of this research, I use the term 'community' to refer to a group of individuals residing in a bounded geographic location, though there are certainly other definitions. This literature deals with the role of socially produced meanings, and how they function on a group level to reify and reproduce themselves through social interactions, and individual cognition and affect. Like place attachment, community attachment has been studied in the context of different variables, which include: population size and density, age, length of tenure, social class, friendship and kinship, and associated bonds. Length of tenure has been found to correlate strongly with community attachment, (Trentelman, 2009), which is not surprising given social relations usually increase or deepen over time, and are the most consistent source of affective connection to place (Hummon, 1992; Gerson et al., 1977; Guest & Lee, 1983; Goudy, 1982). Riger

and Lavrakas (1981) identify two dimensions of attachment that are experienced on a group level: *bondedness*, or the feeling of belonging in one's neighborhood, and *rootedness* to the community (Manzo and Perkins, 2006). This is similar to 'sense of community' in community psychology and sociology, which looks at an affective connection based on a shared history and culture (Perkins and Long, 2002).

David Hummon (1992) proposes the concept of 'community sentiment' to look at the social dimensions of sense of place and place attachment. Within this construct, research on place cognitions and identity explore how neighborhoods and communities are imbued with shared meanings and cultural identities. Only by defining an 'us' can there be a 'them'. Camilla Lewis' (2016) ethnographic work with geriatric populations in East Manchester reveals the centrality of collective identity through place memory in social interactions. In the wake of deindustrialization and restructuring, residents lamented the loss of community as they “made and maintained relations with one another by stressing their sense of similarity, particularly in their use of shared narratives of place located in the past” (ibid, p. 920). These included memories of former ways of life, community members, and local landmarks. These exercises in remembering reaffirmed their collective identity as natives, and establish their ongoing commitment to place-based community.

The literature on community and place meanings also "illuminates the way various social identities can become embedded in and communicated through the local

environment, reinforcing the sentimental bonds for people and places" (Hummon, 1992, p. 259). In this reflexive relationship, the built and natural environment is imprinted with symbolic meanings through a variety of individual and social processes, which act together to form "descriptive statements about 'what kind of place this is'" (Stedman, 2008, p. 66). Hummon identifies three dimensions of community sentiment and meaning that are relevant to my research: biographical experiences transform the landscape into an extension of self; communities take on external identities; social identities can be communicated through the landscape.

7. Gentrification and neighborhood change

Though this research is not situated in the neighborhood change literature, it provides important context for understanding the practical implication of place cognitions and attachments.

Authenticity and branding

Cohesive local identity and a strong sense of place are assets that can be leveraged by communities for establishing legitimate claims in spatial struggles. These aspects can also be packaged effectively for marketing by developers and boosters. As transnational corporations with international customer bases create a new class of workers with high wage jobs and certain urban lifestyle preferences (Meeks, 2016), the very characteristics that make a neighborhood 'authentic' can also be its undoing (Zukin, 2010). An influx of these workers into an area brings an economic shift, and with it, a gradual transformation

of the built and social environment that eventually results in displacement of existing residents and erosion of local identity. In Portland for example, neighborhood character and amenities are leveraged to attract households to high-end mixed use developments and large new single-family homes. Meanwhile, the older single-family housing the city's neighborhoods are known for is being demolished at record rates, to accommodate these new dwellings. In disinvested neighborhoods with high rates of absentee landlords, the inhabitants of these homes are often renters. This creates a paradoxical situation where the physical and social ambience of the neighborhood is leveraged as a marketing tool, even as it is simultaneously being destroyed.

In *Naked City* (2009), sociologist Sharon Zukin explores the deployment of authenticity in the neoliberal city. Using authenticity for neighborhood branding differentiates “a person, a product, or a group from its competitors; it confers an aura of moral superiority” (ibid, xii). In an urban context, authenticity can be embodied through signifiers like historic buildings, ethnic restaurants, artful graffiti, 'dive' bars, or the cultural cache of artist residents. Zukin connects this construct of fictional authenticity to our roles as cultural consumers who “consume a city’s art, food and images and also its real estate” (ibid, xiii). The use of authenticity and neighborhood character as amenity is rampant in real estate marketing. The website for the high-end mixed-use Goat Blocks development in Southeast Portland describes one of the residential buildings as embodying an “edgy attitude, rich with expression and grit.” This is a nationwide trend, echoed in cities across the country. Listings for residential property in the Los Angeles

beach neighborhood of Venice use language like, "live the beach lifestyle that you've been dreaming of." In the gentrifying Latino neighborhood of Pilsen in Chicago, a property listing deftly wrapped authenticity and commerce together; "live in this vibrant and diverse community while you rent out the other units and see your equity grow" (Zillow.com).

In these examples, lifestyle and sense of place are as important to selling the home as traditional amenities like parks and transportation. However, Zukin also sees the radical potential of authenticity to combat negative effects of upscale growth, as a foundation of 'right to the city' claims in spatial struggles. By harnessing the power of local culture through creative practices, combined with grassroots organizing, community members can make a compelling case for their legitimate stake in the neighborhood's future.

Gentrification, moral ownership, and symbolic presence

Commercial gentrification is one of the most visible hallmarks of neighborhood change, and with it comes a shift of symbolic 'moral ownership' (Zukin, 2014). This term refers to the way the cultural presence of a group is established and sustained through semiotics like signage, commercial enterprises, and visible community institutions like places of worship. Zukin (2009) compares the symbology of the built environment to religious iconography, in the sense that icons "derive their meaning from the rituals in which they are embedded, so do neighborhoods, buildings, and streets" (ibid, p. 87). For

this reason, incongruous development like luxury apartments and boutique shops send a semiotic message about dominance that is analogous to colonialism in its many forms (Kaufman, 2009), and can create community anxiety about cultural erasure and displacement.

Andrew Deener's (2012) book, *Venice: A Contested Bohemia in Los Angeles*, examines the effects of rapid valorization in the section of the neighborhood known as Oakwood. This area had been a predominantly Black neighborhood for much of the Twentieth Century, and in the 80s and 90s became home to a growing Latino community, many of whom were recent immigrants from Oaxaca, Mexico. In the early 2000s Venice started to gentrify, and rapidly became one of the most expensive rental markets in Los Angeles (Chiland, 2017). Over the course of several years of ethnographic study in the neighborhood, Deener found fashionable Abbot Kinney Boulevard to be culturally separate from Oakwood, even though it is geographically located within its boundaries. Businesses on Abbot Kinney do not cater to the Black or Latino community, and long-time residents feel this demarcation of space acutely. Deener characterizes it as “the symbolic and spatial division between purity and danger,” which becomes “a social and economic boundary” (ibid, p. 229).

This tension between commodified consumer space and the cultural expression and moral ownership of legacy residents can also be found in the Portland neighborhood of Albina. In Matt Hern's book, *What A City is For* (2016), an interview with community

leader Paul Knauls reveals the impact of commercial gentrification on the Black community. At one time Knauls documented ninety-five Black-owned businesses in Albina, out of which only five remained at the time of the interview. The sad truth, according to Knauls, is that White people won't support these establishments, so as the neighborhood demographic changes, they wither and die. This process is intertwined in a reflexive relationship with residential displacement: A dearth of Black residents jeopardizes Black businesses, and likewise the lack of "identifiably Black-owned and Black-run cultural and social institutions in the neighborhood" (ibid, p. 221) means Black people don't have much impetus to remain in the neighborhood. This phenomenon is rarely discussed in displacement discourse, which tends to focus (understandably) on forced residential displacement, rather than voluntary relocation due to cultural erasure.

Brown-Saracino (2009) also discusses commercial gentrification as a form of displacement, both symbolic and literal, in her book, *A Neighborhood That Never Changes*. In the Andersonville neighborhood of Chicago, she interviewed an Iranian bodega owner who was forced to relocate her business after receiving a 200% rent increase. The merchant attributed the revalorization of the neighborhood to recent street improvements, and "expressed bitterness that, having absorbed loss during construction, she would not benefit from the finished product and other beautifications" (ibid, p. 145). She also felt it deeply unfair, that after she and her husband had helped improve the formerly dangerous neighborhood by opening their business and employing local youth, and after being displaced from her native country due to armed conflict, they would be

forced to uproot once again. This type of loss is experienced as a trauma by the business owner, but is rarely discussed relative to residential displacement. The value of a sweat equity investment from the displaced is seldom considered in policy, as the American property ownership paradigm is not equipped to recognize non-monetary claims to ownership. As a result, policy and strategy to address commercial gentrification are not common in the United States.

Though much scholarly attention has been paid to the gentrification process, understanding of gentrifiers themselves has been mainly confined to Neil Smith's (1996) 'urban pioneers' model (Brown-Saracino, 2009). After studying four separate areas, Brown-Saracino identified three key types of gentrifiers: pioneers, homesteaders, and social preservationists. Pioneers are defined by their interest in capital accumulation through property ownership, and their agenda of reinventing the neighborhood to suit their needs, and in doing so increase the value of their investment. They tend to put a lot of emphasis on increasing homeownership, without much concern for existing communities. Homesteaders fall in the middle of the spectrum, with an appreciation for the built environment and neighborhood character as an amenity, but an openness to change as long as it's the 'right' kind, i.e. small boutique shops and restaurants rather than chain stores. Social preservationists, by contrast, are driven by a holistic appreciation for the various facets of the neighborhood. They are value-rational in their behavior, falling outside of the structural discourse on gentrifiers' financial motivation advanced by Smith et al. Brown-Saracino sees potential in the social preservationists as allies for existing

communities.

The progressive preservation paradigm

In his introduction to *Place, Race, and Story* (2009), Ned Kaufman proposes that preservation should be a sociocultural, rather than just a physical process. It should ideally serve the function of preserving people and cultures, rather than just the structures that contain them. Traditionally, historic preservation policy has been one of the only strategies available to communities address the loss of a cultural resource. The strengths of a successful preservation campaign are the ability to: bring public awareness to the situation; make a building more difficult to demolish with additional procedural requirements, like an Environmental Impact Report; and offer tax benefits to owners of historic buildings. While these are helpful tools, the major drawback to this approach is that it only preserves the physical structure, and usually doesn't offer any assurance of continuing the site's traditional use. Preservation can sometimes feel like a hollow victory when a cherished neighborhood institution becomes a painful reminder of its former self, especially if it is adaptively reused in a way that does not serve the existing community.

The concept of social preservation has emerged in historic preservation and gentrification discourse, in response to the limitations of traditional historic preservation tools at preserving cultures and communities. According to Brown-Saracino (2009), social preservationists use tactics like: working for community non-profits and CDCs; advocating for housing justice policies like rent control; and supporting interventions to

increase the cultural visibility of a given group. Holistic strategies that consider how to keep residents in their neighborhoods and retain cultural resources are just as vital to neighborhood preservation as preserving the character of the built environment.

In his dissertation on preservation in working-class communities, Woodward (2007) proposed that the only true defense against gentrification is the decommodification of housing. Multiple scholars mention rent control, in particular, as a key social preservation strategy. Michael Sorkin (2016) calls this policy 'human preservation', which is akin to social preservation, and draws a connection between it and traditional historic preservation. He envisions rent control as a means of harmonizing the agendas of historic and social preservation, and feels it should be “one of the techniques we use to cultivate and protect our indigenous urban life forms” (ibid, p. 226) This kind of thinking, which looks at neighborhood change as a multifaceted process necessitating diversity of thought and approach, constitutes what is known as the 'progressive preservation paradigm'.

8. Place attachment and neighborhood preservation

Shared meanings and the sense of community are salient factors in the context of neighborhood change or proposed development. When place disruption occurs - whether through development, natural disaster or some other mode - the negative effects on community and individual health can be significant (Apfelbaum, 2000; Fullilove, 2005; Tall, 1996; Manzo, 2014). Place attachment is "integral to self-definitions, including individual and communal aspects of identity," (Brown and Perkins, 1992), which are

directly threatened by disruption. Fullilove (2014) finds these detrimental effects in low-income populations, especially residents of public housing, who have experienced serial displacement due to government programs like HOPE IV. She conceives of place attachment in these contexts as “a ‘community practice’, intertwined with economic, physical and social capacity of place” (p. 146). Every time residents are forced to move, they lose all of these supportive elements.

Place attachment, along with social capital, has been linked to civic activism for a number of reasons. Literature that specifically deals with the relationship between place attachment and environmental threats on the community scale is interested in identifying

“...the complex place and social cognitions, emotions, and behaviors, in response to environmental disruptions and threats, that feed into an interpretive process at both the individual and community level and that lead to collective, community-level actions, adaptations, or acceptance of the disruption” (Mihaylov and Perkins, 2014, p. 63).

Though there is a lack of theoretical consensus on how place attachment relates causally to engagement and action (Lewicka, 2005), many studies have found engagement to be predicted *by* place attachment. In other words, having an attachment does not necessarily mean one will become engaged, but most who are engaged are also attached. There are a number of mitigating factors that may explain this, such as strong neighborhood ties and social fabric. Lewicka (2010) writes, "It is not enough to be fond of a place. A locally based social network is necessary to help convert emotion" (p. 46).

Similarly, Brown and Perkins (1992) found a link through the ways in which place attachment promotes social cohesion, and interest in shared history.

Other variables, such as the presence of an activist culture, past successes, politics, and individual personality, have also been found to play a role in attached individuals getting involved with their communities (Bailey, et al, 2016; Anton and Lawrence, 2016; Wolsink, 2000). Stedman (2002) found residents with a high level of place attachment and low level of place satisfaction were the most likely to engage in place-protective behavior, especially where preferred place meanings are threatened. This is congruent with the phenomenon of place attachment becoming more clearly articulated when place is threatened (Low, 1992). This has prompted some place scholars to reconsider the pejorative NIMBY label. Devine-Wright (2009) proposes " a new psychological framework rethinking NIMBY responses as place-protective actions, founded upon processes of place attachment and place identity" (p. 428). He argues that the underpinnings of the NIMBY mentality are actually the same attachments that are usually considered positive for community health and vitality, and thus the negative perception of this behavior deserves to be reconsidered.

In his research on place-protective behavior in the case of a proposed wind farm in Wales, Devine-Wright (2010) found that the strength of the attachment itself was not as significant a factor as how people *interpreted the change*. A project may be perceived as threatening "place-related positive distinctiveness" when it is believed to be incongruous

with local character (Devine-Wright, 2009, p. 434). He identified these mitigating variables in the evaluative process: place meaning; interpretation of project; trust in developer or opposition; general values; activist behavioral norms of local culture; track record of success.

Lewicka (2010) agrees that the meaning attached to the place is the key element, along with "the degree to which the planned change is perceived as destroying the place's identity" (p. 219). The interpretive process takes place on the group and the individual level, and entails assessing the change in relation to the physical and symbolic characteristics of the place (Devine-Wright, 2009). With more densely populated areas like towns and cities, changes may be perceived as local character being threatened by the "encroaching placelessness" of new development (Stedman, 2002, p.8). This perspective sheds much-needed light on 'NIMBY behavior', and what motivates it. Social representations theory explains how proposed changes are discussed within a group, leading to specific attitudes and behavioral responses, which in turn are strengthened through community action (Devine-Wright, 2009). In this process, threat can be used to "mobilize and sustain a common sense of community identity" (ibid, p. 435).

9. Relevance to policy and planning

This kind of research speaks directly to Stedman's (2002) call for an approach that addresses "the creating and sustaining of symbolic meanings about a place" (Devine-Wright, 2009, p. 437). These kinds of findings can inform community advocacy

and planning efforts, and serve a community empowerment role. By "tapping into emotional bonds to place" members of the community can "articulate and act upon meaning" (Manzo and Perkins, 2006, p. 347).

Manzo and Perkins (2006) also identify a literature gap between place attachment and planning theory. According to the authors, the former does not usually engage with the concepts on a group scale, and the latter emphasizes community empowerment, but overlooks emotional motivation for engagement. Accordingly, "each area of inquiry has much to offer the other, yet few links have been made between them" (ibid, p.335). Place attachment research on a community scale has the potential to catalyze development of social capital, community mobilization, and citizen engagement in response to environmental threats (Perkins and Mihaylov 2014; Manzo and Perkins 2006).

In particular, articulating place meanings can bring disparate groups together, and help with consensus building in the participatory planning process (Manzo and Perkins, 2006). This builds community power by fostering partnerships across difference, based on a foundation of common interest, which increases the likelihood of being mobilized to action. The Dudley Street Initiative in Boston is a successful instance of the community coming together over a vacant lot, whose clean-up had "symbolic weight" (ibid, p.346). This is an example of residents channeling place attachment and meanings into legitimate claims to their neighborhood, which then translate into action. Identifying place meanings in this way can also be a resource for neighborhoods that need to be galvanized to

withstand gentrification (Saegert, 2000; Pretty, et al, 2003). Community Benefit Agreements are one powerful way that articulated values can be translated into policy. As Manzo and Perkins (2006) write, "the process of collective action works better when emotional ties to places and their inhabitants are cultivated" (p.347).

This consciousness of place can also be a positive asset for developers, planners and public officials when working with communities. Wirth, et al's (2016) research on resident response to proposed changes in Switzerland, found when changes are perceived to be an upgrade in line with existing character, they are generally supportive. It is not urban growth or change *itself* that is placing stress on person-place bonds, but rather the nature of the change. As such, Beidler and Morrison (2016) suggest that designers and planners interested in maintaining a sense of place "look beyond the physical dimension and consider a more holistic sociocultural experience" (p. 212).

Wirth, et al (2016) also advocate for development that is sensitive to distinctive features of the built and cultural environment, and suggest this may avoid conflict and opposition to proposed projects. They suggest that "the inclusion of residents' perceptions in early stages of urban planning may be valuable for identifying and mediating value trade-offs that might occur during later stages of urban changes" (ibid, p.78). This line of inquiry has recently been used to predict opposition to development and infrastructure, which can save developers and governments time and money.

The benefits of research that seeks to understand local place meanings has a range of values, from community empowerment, to galvanizing action and engagement, to facilitating better development and planning processes. A better understanding of the person-place relationship, with all its nuances, may provide "better and stronger arguments for the conservation and maintenance of environments that would be otherwise destroyed or totally changed" (Altman and Low, 1992, p.183). It is my hope that this research about St. Johns will serve that function.

Chapter IV: Methods

1. Introduction

Over four years ago I moved to North Portland and started spending time in St. Johns. Developing a personal relationship with the neighborhood was the foundation of my interest in the subject, and of my embodied understanding of the culture and sense of place. In winter of 2016/2017 I conducted research for a field paper on community organizing in St. Johns, which entailed attending multiple neighborhood association meetings, community events, and interviewing key informants. For my thesis research the following winter, I interviewed more community members, and attended all St. Johns Neighborhood Association meetings from December of 2017 through May 2018. I also attended community events like the Fix-It-Fair and the St. Johns Community Expo and volunteered as a reader at the St. Johns Racquet Center via the SMART program, and as a marching band judge for the St. Johns Parade.

In approaching my qualitative research on place meanings in St. Johns, it was important to me to take a participatory approach. As cultural geographer Dydia DeLyser (2016, p. 808) writes, participatory research "reveals a deep and genuine care for the community" - one which does not strive for a scientific objectivity, but where the researcher positions herself as an advocate. This entails an emotional connection, and does not strive for positivist objectivity. I wanted my research to produce a body of work that would be useful not just for this paper, but for the community as they navigate land use decisions. Additionally, I wanted to use a method of data collection that was not

structured around my preconceived notions of what was important, but gave participants scaffolding that would allow them to tell *me* what is significant.

2. Visual qualitative methods

Qualitative methodologies like ‘go-alongs’, where the participant walks with the researcher and narrates the environment, is one approach to understanding of the person-place relationship in this vein (Adams and Larkham, 2016). This speaks to a trend in social science research that has sought to "re-appraise the creative and embodied significance of individuals' recollections." (ibid, p.1) The authors found this kind of data to be useful for context-sensitive planning decisions. Photo elicitation is a similar methodology, and entails the researcher interviewing the participant while looking at images either created by the participant or some other party. Cathrine Degnen (2016) used photo elicitation with geriatric populations in a former coal mining village in the UK to cue memories of ‘embodied affordances’, or sensory place memories, and found it to be a highly effective mnemonic device.

In a variation on the ‘go-along’, Clare Rishbeth (2014) used self-recorded walks for her project, *Walking Voices*. In this model the researcher isn't present at all, allowing for solitary self-reflection as the participant traverses a place and records their memories, attachments, thoughts and opinions with an audio device. The major advantage of these kinds of methods is in allowing the participant to lead the research, inverting the traditional power structure and allowing for a richer spectrum of answers and categories

to emerge (Beckley et al, 2007; Harrild, 2014). In this case, the value is not statistical validity, but in the depth and breadth of a small data set. These examples correspond to the two types of qualitative studies Lewicka (2010) identifies: verbal and pictorial. However, Stedman et al (2014) suggest that visual methods have been underutilized in place attachment and meaning research, relative to their potential contribution (p.113). They cite the early work of Collier (1957), who found that when photo and non-photo based research was compared, the former enhanced memory, and "can trigger responses that may lie submerged in verbal interviewing" (p.854). In our highly visual society, it is surprising that visual methods are not more common (Van Auken et al., 2010).

3. Resident-Employed Photography (REP)

While photo elicitation often utilizes images created by the researcher or other parties, Resident-Employed Photography (REP) uses images created by the participants. This method articulates sense of place by giving the participant a disposable camera and a prompt (ex. "Photograph the twelve things you would miss most about this place if you had to move"), and following up with an interview to discuss the photos. The use of disposable cameras is strategic, because it limits the amount of frames the participant can take, eliminating the feedback loop of reviewing the image and modifying it that exists with digital photography. The intention is to direct attention to the subject being photographed, rather than the process of photographing it. According to Beckley et al (2007), "limiting the number of photographs, we believe, led to a more targeted reflection of place attachments" (pp. 918-19). It also ensures that each participant is working with

the exact same tools and constraints, which give both the images and the process consistency. As a photographer with over 23 years of experience, beginning with film and later digital, this resonates strongly with my embodied understanding of the medium.

Beckley and Stedman (2002, 2004, 2006, 2014) have been at the forefront of this method, which they have applied mainly to part- and full-time residents in environments with high amenity natural resources. Other variations have been used to study visitor and tourist place perceptions (Tonge et al., 2013), and to conduct market research about commercial spaces (Rojak & Cole, 2015). For place scholars studying resident behaviors and cognitions, it has been useful for understanding place meanings that form the foundation of place attachment (Beckley et al., 2014), in participants' own words and framework. This approach allows for a closer look at the "'raw material' that underpins a person's attachment to place" (Beckley and Stedman, 2007, p.914), and differences in component parts across participants.

What are the strengths of this method?

This deeper dive into place attachments and cognitions can get at the specifics behind nebulous terms like "small town feel" (Harrild, 2014), that are often used in surveys and other methods with researcher-constructed categories. REP asks participants to explain what exactly those terms mean, using concrete examples. Hawkins (1999) found that the process served as a form of cueing, "creating within (participants) initiative to enter, and experience their community" (p.28), while In Tonge et al (2013) theorized

that the act of framing the photo changed and sharpened perception.

The results have produced exceptionally thick data, which sheds light on the complex, multifaceted nature of place meanings and attachment (Van Aucken et al, 2010). This is attributed to both the reflective process itself, and the unique capacity of images to convey multiple meanings, which speaks to the integrated nature of place meanings and attachment. In Van Aucken et al.'s (2010) research, the authors found "An ordinary picture of an ordinary-looking trail was able to capture multi-layered meanings attached to a particular place and led to discussion of local politics and community life, both past and present" (p.383). As such, the method can shed light on relationships between different meanings and aspects, and combined with other types of data, present a "triangulation opportunity" (Stedman et al., 2014).

Another strength of REP is that the participant is able to do this reflective work without the researcher present, which often produces more thoughtful responses than a traditional interview. The open-ended structure allows the participant to guide meaning making, rather than the constraints of a survey or structured interview (Beckley et al, 2007; Stedman et al, 2014, Harrild, 2014). This de-centers the researcher as authority figure, and addresses long-standing power imbalances between researcher and subject-participant. In this scenario, "the photographer becomes the 'expert' in demonstrating what is special about one's place" (Beckley and Stedman, 2014, p.120). This speaks to my interest in participatory research that is strongly driven by the

participants, with the wellbeing of the community at the forefront.

Lastly, some researchers have proposed a link between REP and increased community engagement. Beckley et al (2008) found that many participants enjoyed the project "to the point of being personally transformative," and "many respondents suggested that their attachments to these elements became both clearer and stronger" (p. 926). This kind of increased awareness has potential to lead to involvement with local events and organizations, as well as place-protective behavior. Hawkins' (1999) found REP to be an effective community development tool in that sense. Residents were enthusiastic to attend an event reviewing the REP data, and the process appeared to have facilitated productive conversations between grassroots and elected leaders. Planning staff also expressed interest in using the photo data in their comprehensive plan, indicating that REP can be a valuable planning tool. Kopra and Sustainable's (2006) study for the Sustainable Forest Management Network used REP, citing its proven effectiveness in "capturing and communicating socio-cultural and biophysical elements of a place" (p.2). Harrild's application of REP in road planning led him to conclude the method has "great potential for achieving a sense of productive public involvement" (p.66). Van Auken et al. (2010) conclude that REP (or as they call it, PDPE) "holds outstanding promise, not only for social science research but also for application in land-use planning, visioning and other attempts to achieve sustainable community development" (p.374).

4. Research design

For my research design I modified the structure slightly by substituting written responses for interviews. This was both to complete the project with the allotted time and resources, and because I was interested in whether giving participants time to reflect on their choices independently would allow for even less constraint of meaning by the researcher. I was awarded a STAR Grant from the Institute of Sustainable Solutions at Portland State University, which allowed me to use single-use cameras, per the original method. Each participant was given a manila envelope with a 26-exposure camera with 400 ISO film and flash, consent form, "mental map" exercise form, exposure list, demographic questionnaire, and instructions. The packets were available for pick up at the St. Johns Center for Opportunity, a neighborhood non-profit, which is open Tuesday through Friday from nine to five o'clock. There were also two evening sessions for packet pick up and drop off, during which was available at a local coffee shop. Participants had two weeks to complete the activities.

Following Beckley and Stedman's methodology, I asked for participants to select 12 subjects to photograph, and take two photos of each. I also instructed them to make a list of the 12 in advance, so they weren't just wandering around the neighborhood photographing without intention. My research design departs from Beckley and Stedman in that, instead of asking participants to choose 12 things that mean the most to them about their community, I instead asked them to reflect *first* on what they loved about living in St. Johns, and then select 12 things to represent what they had come up with. I

made this modification because I did not want people to feel like they had to be literal with their selections, and approach the exercise like a "top 12" list. I also asked them to write 1-2 paragraphs explaining each selection.

Recruitment

The objective of recruitment was to match the neighborhood's demographic profile as closely as possible, and to include both people who do, and who do not participate in local organizations. St. Johns has many residents who are actively engaged in neighborhood affairs, but they are still a vast minority out of the roughly 15,500 people who live there. These residents, who are mainly white homeowners, have been the most heavily represented in the neighborhood associations and in city planning efforts. As such, it was of great importance to include participants who were not part of the "usual suspects" cohort, both to achieve equity goals, and to compare place meanings across differences. Extensive outreach was undertaken during the month of January and early February with this objective in mind.

The outreach strategy was to start with existing local contacts and build from there, with the intention of partnering with community leaders and non-profits. I presented at both the St. Johns and the Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association meetings in January, indicating that all present were welcome to apply, but that I was also seeking to reach the diverse spectrum of St. Johns. The recruitment criteria specified individuals who had (1) resided in St. Johns for at least three years; (2) were over 18; (3) would not want to live

elsewhere, and/or would describe themselves as "attached." I distributed basic, 5.5 x 4 black and white flyers at the neighborhood association meetings, and left them at key locations. Because I knew the neighborhood association cohort would be the easiest to engage and recruit, I repeated this message often when speaking to residents, hoping someone would have a neighbor or other community member in mind that did not fit the 'white, middle-aged, homeowner' profile. Snowball sampling consisted of talking to friends and acquaintances in the area, and passing out flyers. I met with local community activists Babs Adamsky, John Teply, and Rachel Hill to get their feedback and ideas for recruitment. At this early stage I started posting on the St. Johns Facebook group, which is quite active with over 15,000 members.

After assessing the response to my initial efforts, I decided to design a more attractive color poster that could be posted around the area, and hung them in the windows of businesses and non-profits in the downtown area. To reach residents in north St. Johns, Babs Adamsky and I drove around one afternoon, and she directed me to community boards in laundry rooms, exterior store walls, and other locations. This area is where the greatest concentration of low-income and people of color reside. I also wrote a short piece about the project for the local newspaper, the *St. Johns Review*, which resulted in a number of responses. I also hung the posters in the windows of business and non-profits in the downtown area.

I continued to reach out to non-profits, including the Community Alliance of Tenants (with whom I have a previous relationship), Occupy St. Johns, and the SUN program, among others, but none of these resulted in recruitment partnerships. Many people were enthusiastic and wanted to help by giving me contact information about for others, but I do not know if any of the organizations I spoke with actually distributed the information, other than the residential services coordinator of the Terry Schrunk Tower public housing. I emailed several teachers at Roosevelt High School, the director of the St. Johns Racquet Center requested a meeting with me, and I had a table at the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's Fix-It-Fair. I also attended the grand opening of the Restoration Outreach Community Center church, and left flyers with the director. Towards the end of the recruitment period, I still did not have many renter applicants, so I accompanied staff at the St. Johns Center for Opportunity to the Cathedral Gardens public housing apartments to leave flyers on residents' doors. I also posted several more times on the Facebook page, mentioning that I was looking for specific demographics.

Though the recruitment process was extensive, I was not able to reflect the demographics of St. Johns in my sample group. There were 50 participant spots, with an actual goal of at least 40 complete data sets, to account for attrition. Interested parties were asked to apply to participate, by answering the following questions: (1) Do you own or rent your home?; (2) What is your age?; (3) Do you live on the north or south side of Fessenden/St. Louis?; (4) Are you involved with any neighborhood organizations?; (5) How long have you lived here? Though I was interested in other variables as well, these

were the main five that I wanted to differentiate across. I was hoping for a large applicant pool so the participants could be selected evenly along the lines of these attributes. Due to people dropping out before the study had begun or not confirming participation, the opportunity to participate was extended to everyone who had applied. 47 packets were picked up, and 43 complete sets were gathered.

Managing the participants and gathering the materials was challenging and time-consuming, especially for one person. Some participants received significant extensions beyond the two week timeframe, and alternate arrangements were occasionally needed to facilitate drop-off or pick-up. Most people understood and followed the instructions, but there were a few instances of participants only writing a topical caption for their image. For the most part though, participants seemed to understand the spirit of the assignment, and enjoy the process.

5. Sample group

Self-selection bias *is* a factor in this method, in that it requires a minimum commitment of 3-4 hours, and an interest in this type of creative activity. This inherently limits the pool of potential participants. Additionally, the recruitment materials specified individuals who had resided in St. Johns for at least three years, who were over 18, and who would not want to live elsewhere, or would describe themselves as ‘attached’. These criteria exclude an unknown number of residents, and it would be worthwhile to try this method with a different set of participants, especially a group that feels ambivalent about

living in St. Johns. Additionally, the choice to use written reflections rather than interview might have excluded potential participants who do not feel comfortable with writing, whether because of skill level, or because English is not their first language. Furthermore, a cash or gift card stipend was not offered, and that might have made it feasible for participants who would need to be compensated for lost work time. The disproportionate numbers of homeowners, women, and people in the 40-49 age range who responded is intriguing, and a potential topic for further study. A "non-participation" survey administered through Qualtrics and distributed via the St. Johns Facebook page revealed the following reasons for not participating:

Table 3: Non-participation survey (open choice)

	Renters (<i>N</i> = 13)	Homeowners (<i>N</i> = 54)
I was interested but did not have time	2	15
The activity didn't appeal to me	0	3
I don't trust researchers	0	1
I have mixed feelings about living in St. Johns	0	3
I don't like living in St. Johns	0	1
Most of the things I like about St. Johns are gone	2	0
I like St. Johns, but wouldn't say I'm attached	1	3
I feel more attached to North Portland as a whole	0	4
I didn't understand the purpose of the research	1	9
I was interested but didn't meet the criteria	2	13
As a renter, I feel uncertain about my future here	4	N/A
As a renter, I don't feel like I'm part of the community	1	N/A

This small survey illustrates (1) the time investment is not possible for everyone; (2) that there were people who had either lived in the neighborhood for less than three years and/or were under 18 who would have participated; (3) renters may be reluctant to participate in these kinds of activities because they feel uncertain about their future as

members of the community. This last point is even echoed in the respondent proportions of this survey (13/54), and is something that deserves further study. Oregon's Landlord Tenant law offer renters no long-term stability in their housing, and they may be hesitant to engage with their community because of the potential for displacement and the emotional trauma that comes with having the sever those bonds.

Table 4: Sample characteristics

	Study (<i>N</i> = 43)	St. Johns (<i>N</i> = 15,951)
<u>Age</u>		
18-24	7 %	8%
25-30	7%	9.5%
31-39	16. 3%	21%
40-49	32.6 %	13%
50-59	11.6%	11%
60-69	11.6%	6%
70-79	11.6%	3%
> 80	2.3%	2.5%
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>		
White	78.6%	78.9%
Latino	4.8%	15.86%
Asian	4.8%	3.9%
Black	2.4%	5.6%
Black and another race	2.4%	2.2%
White and another race	4.8%	5.1%
Native American	2.4%	1.2%
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	30.2%	50.7%
Female	69.8%	49.3%
<u>Homeownership</u>		
Own	79.1%	52%
Rent	20.9%	48%
<u>Grew up in St. Johns</u>		
Yes	23.3 %	
No	76.6%	

**Lives north or south of
Fessenden/St. Louis**

North	41.9%
South	58.1%

Length of Tenure

3-5 years	18.6%
6-10 years	25.6%
11-20 years	37.2%
21-40 years	14%
>40 years	4.7%

**Number of neighbors
acquainted with**

0	4.7%
1-3	0
4-9	37.2%
>10	51.

**Of participants with
multigenerational roots (6)**

First generation	16.7%
Second generation	50%
Third generation	16.7%
Fourth generation	0%
>Fourth generation	16.7%

**Number of community
organizations one
participates in**

0	32.6%
1	20.9%
2	16.3%
3	14%
4	4.7%
5	2.3%
>5	9.3%

6. Coding

Process

Participants were instructed to email their texts, with the option to turn in a handwritten document in the event that they could not access a computer. Next, I imported the texts into the Dedoose analytic platform, along with the demographic information collected in the materials packet. Demographic information was collected in order to see if there were any commonalities across different variables. The overall objective with coding was to look for patterns and relationships related to place meanings, sense of place, and attachment process, and to organize these findings into thematic categories that relate to my research questions. The texts were coded using an

'open coding', or 'initial coding' approach (Saldana, 2009), which entails line-by-line coding, looking at any and all elements of interest. Coding strategies at this stage included: simultaneous coding (two or more codes per excerpt), descriptive coding (labeling topics), emotion coding (affective language), and values coding (statements of belief or opinion). I also created codes and categories related to key concepts in the literature, and to aspects that I know are important from my previous research, like 'collective identity' and 'shared meaning of importance'. Other codes that coalesced from observing patterns in the data were *Boundaries*, *Idiosyncratic Detail*, *Activism/Advocacy*, *Non-Verbal Communication in The Built Environment*, *Community*, and *Place Setting for Social Interactions*, among others.

The main concepts from the literature that guided my codes and analysis were: Hummon's theory of everyday vs. ideological rootedness; Cross' seven typologies of meaning; social vs. amenity-based attachment; the role of biographical connection; and procedural and narrative memory. In accordance with my research questions, the objective was to understand (1) *what* people, places and other features people choose; (2) *why* each selection was chosen, by looking for the cognition/meaning underpinning the choice; (3) when applicable, *how* this place attachment was formed, whether through individual memory, collective identity, sensory memory, habitual use, likelihood of positive future interaction, etc. In keeping with the phenomenological nature of the person-place relationship, all of these categories overlap to some extent, but 'why' and

'how' were the most frequently intertwined. Additionally, the high instance of co-occurring codes pointed to the multifaceted, 'thick' quality of the data.

The second round of coding focused more closely on meanings and processes, and how they related to larger overarching concepts. At this stage, I created codes like *Seasonal Continuity* and *Habitual Use*, after noticing repetitions in the way people talked about their place routines, or how a place was described in context of seasons and weather. Special attention was paid to distinguishing the nuances in how participants talked about places or memories using language of emotion. I revisited the excerpts coded *Affect*, and divided them down into *Personal Affect* (*I love this place, I feel proud*) or *Evaluative* statements with an emotional foundation (*it is inspiring, this is beautiful*). The way participants described neighborhood change, and their attitude and tone, resulted in the parent code *Changes*, with child codes like *Apprehension/Sadness* and *Supportive/Enthusiastic*.

In this phase the focus was in fine-tuning the codes, and finely parsing the data. This involved re-naming some codes, and re-parenting others. For example, *Amenities/Values* was separated into two parent codes after concluding that these are fairly different concepts. Most of the child codes under *Amenities* were left there, but *Values* became a sub-parent code that included *Advocacy, Activism and Volunteerism, Community* and *Small Businesses*. Some of the categories were broken down into constituent parts, for example, *Portland Relationship* was divided into two, to include the

child code *Separate/Underdog*. This captures an important aspect of the St. Johns identity, and was eventually relocated under *St. Johns Narrative/Imaginary. Portland Relationship* and its excerpts were excluded from the final code set, because they were neutral and did not feel relevant.

Many of the excerpts had multiple code applications, offering insight into how meanings overlap and relate to each other. One piece of text might have *Multi-Generational Use, Seasonal Continuity, Habitual Use, and Character: Industrial*. Another example is the selection by multiple participants of "tiny libraries," which was coded as *Social: Non-Verbal Communication in the Built Environment*. That code was commonly applied, and included everything from murals to graffiti to flyers. Codes concurrently applied to those excerpts might be *Community*, or *Social: Activism/Advocacy*. In this case, coding referred to both the 'what' and 'why' of a selection. Dedoose offers a way to look at frequency of co-occurring codes, which was useful for examining some of these relationships more closely.

Creating thematic categories

The final cycle of refinement entailed making master categories that represent key themes in the data. These themes were created with both the literature, and the research questions in mind, paying particular attention to the 'what, why, how' framework. Child and parent codes were shuffled around accordingly, and many excerpts were reviewed and their coding was updated accordingly. Some of the original parent code became these

master categories, and every excerpt that received that code was re-assigned a child code. In this system, none of the master categories functioned as codes, but rather as thematic umbrellas. For example, *Continuity Through Place* was originally a parent code with *Seasonal Continuity*, *Historical Family Places* and *Multigenerational Use* under it. After identifying a number of other codes, both parents and children, that could fit under that general theme, *Continuity Through Place* was made into a category. All excerpts that received that code were assigned a more specific code in that category.

Place Memories was renamed *Biographical*, in keeping with the literature, and was moved under *Continuity Through Place*. Existing child codes were *Childhood Place Memory*, *Narrative Place Memory*, and *Historical Family Places* and *Multigenerational Use* were also moved under this parent. In this case, *Place Memories* transitioned from a descriptive code, to a code that represented a larger idea (*Biographical*), and could encompass more topics. A new code was also created to reference person-place relationships based on physical repetition, in reference to Dengen's (2016) work on 'embodied affordances'. *History* became *Historical Continuity*, and was moved under this category, as was *Sensory*, which had previously been a parent code with separate child codes for each sense. The underlying idea behind this process was to think about the deeper meaning of each code, in the larger context of the data.

Final codes

1. **Amenities**
 - Close to nature
 - Food options

- Live music/Nightlife
 - Recreation
 - Supports realization of goals
 - Public transit
 - Walkable
- WHAT

2. **Built and Natural Environmental**

- Businesses (Separate tag for each, over 50)
 - Physical features of environment
 - Boundaries
 - Geography
 - Idiosyncratic detail
 - Murals
 - Non-verbal communication in the physical environment
 - Trees and other flora
 - Places (Separate tag for each, 24 total)
- WHAT

3. **Cognitions and Affect**

- Affective statements
 - Evaluative
 - Personal affect
 - Spiritual connection
 - Thankful/grateful
 - Attitude/Belief
 - Changes
 - Apprehension/sadness
 - Mixed feelings
 - Neutral/Descriptive
 - New Wave St. Johns
 - Supportive/optimistic
 - Values
 - Advocacy, Activism and Volunteerism
 - Community
 - Small businesses
- ATTACHMENT
- RESPONSE TO PLACE THREAT
- WHAT/WHY

4. **Continuity through place**

- Biographical
 - Childhood place memory
 - Narrative place memory
 - Historical family places
 - Multigenerational use
 - Embodied relationship
 - Habitual use
- WHY
- HOW

- Historical continuity
 - Seasonal continuity
 - Sensory
- WHY
HOW

5. **Neighborhood character**

- Affordable
 - Diverse
 - Historic architecture
 - Industrial
 - Reminds of home town
 - Scenic views
 - Small town feel
- WHAT

6. **St. Johns narrative/Imaginary**

- Industrial history
 - Shared meaning of importance
 - St. Johns identity
 - Symbolic
 - Underdog/Separate from Portland
 - Working class
- WHY

7. **Social**

- Children
 - Community figures
 - Family
 - Neighbors
 - Pets
 - Place setting for interaction
 - St. Johns Parade and Bizarre
 - St. Johns Review
 - Third spaces
- WHAT/WHY

7. Participant experience

In an open-ended feedback survey after the study, participants had a number of positive things to say about participating in the project. The general sentiment was that the activity was 'fun,' and presented an opportunity to get out into the community and reflect on the constituent parts in a holistic context. One participant explained that she loved the neighborhood already, "but sometimes a little extra push to think and be

creative helps," and that " the project allowed me to think more about where we live." As a city planner, she also appreciated the opportunity to reflect on "the positives about change as well as the positives about retaining the soul/core of St. Johns." Another participant framed the experience in the context of his own past residential mobility, and the meaningful nature of his connection to St. Johns through his wife's six-generation legacy. He wrote, "this makes St. Johns a unique place for me and the process I went thru in completing my small part of your project was very valuable to me on a personal level."

Other evaluations described participation in the project as "a spiritual experience," an "opportunity to reflect," and said that it made them "think about my neighborhood, what I like, love and appreciate about St. Johns." This last participant reported that it also led her to think more seriously about volunteering in the neighborhood. One participant said her participation drew her attention to the abundance of nature in the area, while another mentioned the 'heritage trees', which have "seen it all." On the selection process, one participant reported, "seeing them all together was a whole was a great reminder of the abundance of gifts we have in the community." The single-use camera was also cited as a positive element. One person said it helped them focus on the subject rather than the photography process, and another said that it "introduces an element of risk and somehow made the project a little more exciting." Overall I believe that the potential for reflection opportunities, and even increased community engagement, is one of the strongest aspects of this method.

Chapter V: FINDINGS

In this section I discuss the most significant codes, and nuances and variations within them. I also present text and photo examples which illustrate the complex, multi layered relationship between them. The number of occurrences refers to the amount of times the code was applied, while sources refers to the number of participants who it applied to. Looking at discrepancies in these two numbers gives an idea of whether the code was used multiple times by several people, or was spread more evenly across the data sets.

Beidler and Morrison's (2015) four dimensional sense of place framework is a useful way to understand how some of these findings relate to the place literature as a whole.

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Code categories from my research</i>
The Self - Relationship to place can be measured in terms of place identity, place dependence, and place attachment.	<i>Biographical, Cognitions and Affect, St. Johns Narrative/Identity</i>
The Environment - Tangible elements like nature, historic landmarks, etc.	<i>Neighborhood Character, Amenities, Built and Natural Environment</i>
Social interaction - Phenomenological research in the realm of cultural geography (Buttimer, 1980; Relph, 1976; Seamon, 1989) emphasises for the importance of lived experience.	<i>Social, Biographical</i>
Time - This dimension acts upon the previous three.	<i>Continuity Through Place, St. Johns Narrative/Imaginary</i>

Table 5: Beidler and Morrisons's Four Dimensional Sense of Place Framework

1. Amenities

<i>Code</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Close to nature	27	17
Food options	15	11
Live music/Nightlife	6	5
Recreation	12	10
Supports realization of goals	18	11
Trimet (municipal bus)	5	5
Walkable	19	14

Table 6: Amenities Codes

The Amenities category refers to aspects that are traditionally considered positive features of place, and that increase both use and exchange value. *Close to Nature* was the most popular amenity. Several people referenced the peninsula’s slogan, “Gateway to Nature,” which can be found on signs at the western and eastern ends of the region. Some other popular locations are: Kelley Point Park, Forest Park, Cathedral Park, the Willamette River, the Columbia River, Smith Bybee Lakes, Sauvie Island, Baltimore Woods, the Columbia Slough Trail, Pier Park, and even the distant volcanoes that can be seen on clear days. General natural elements, like wildlife sightings and being close to the water, are also mentioned. Words like “fortunate” and “love” are frequently used to describe proximity to nature in St. Johns, and some benefits like “relaxing” or a “renewing experience” are cited.

Paragraphs about proximity to nature are sometimes completely focused on the subject itself, but more often they are framed in the context of nature as a part of the integrated package of amenities. One participant included it in a list along with convenient location (relative to grocery shopping, freeways, and “beautiful architecture” like the bridge), great neighbors, and walkability. Another person wrote, “the juxtaposition of industry, small-town residences, and abundant natural beauty is really the icing on the cake...” On the proximity to Forest Park, “one does not need to leave the neighborhood to get a hike in. A quick walk across the bridge and one has miles of forested trails to explore.” One participant who is a geologist even built a fire pit out of local basalt rock, in homage to the volcanoes of the Pacific Northwest that are visible from St. Johns.

Walkability was the second most popular amenity. This is in keeping with the Jacobsian new-urbanism that is a desired feature for young professionals and the creative class. Not surprisingly, 46.5 percent of references to this topic were from people who have lived in the area for 3-4 years, with 25 percent from residents with a 6-10 year tenure. It was not mentioned by people who have lived here for over 40 years, and 21-40 years of tenure makes up only 7.4 percent. This does not mean that long-time residents do not appreciate the compact nature of the neighborhood, but rather they may not have a conscious awareness of it as a discrete amenity, because it is so familiar to them.

A participant who recently bought a home in the area explained, “a major reason I decided to move to St. Johns was because of its walkability. I grew up in a small town with a suburban feel where the only place I could walk to was a Walmart.” In this instance, walkability functions as attractive amenity that is not available in an auto-oriented suburban development. This idea of walkability ties into a conception of small-scale urban life and authentic community that is becoming increasingly valued in the return-to-the-city movement, and is an integral part of the City of Portland’s 2035 Comprehensive Plan. As one participant explained, “When we first started looking for a house, this was what sold me. The small town feel within Portland - people were super friendly, everything was walkable. Ideal. I love to walk into town and peer into the shop windows or stop in to say hello.” In addition to identifying walkability as a value, many participants mentioned the benefit of certain places being walkable from their homes.



Figure 19: Downtown St. Johns (REP). “Downtown St Johns takes me back to the old days. It feels safe, friendly and we have a fabulous selection of independent shops. As a family, we do our best to find what we need within walking distance of our house.”

2. Built and Natural Environment

<i>Parent code</i>	<i>Child code</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Businesses	(See Appendix A)	98	N/A
Places	(See Appendix A)	206	N/A
Physical feature of environment			
	Boundaries	12	10
	Geography	5	5
	Idiosyncratic detail	33	21
	Murals	12	10
	Non-verbal communication in the built environment	21	14
	Trees and other flora	6	6

Table 7: Built and Natural Environment Codes

This category focuses on that 'what' of place meaning and attachment: the sites and physical features that were identified as significant. The *Business* code was used in a descriptive capacity, to tag each place mentioned. Due to the large number of businesses identified, and to the topical nature of the code, findings are presented in the appendix.

Places was also primarily a way to keep track of the actual locations selected and how often they are mentioned, and the full list is in Appendix A. The most popular were Cathedral Park, the Multnomah County Library, Pier Park, place of residence, the plaza, and of course the St. Johns Bridge. With the exception of the bridge - which has mainly symbolic and aesthetic value - the other locations were associated with a multitude of uses, from recreation, to a place for social interaction. Of these, residence was the only

one that was remotely surprising to me, as the others are well-established neighborhood staples.⁶ A common theme was the realization of the goal of finding and/or making a real home, and putting down roots. One participant, who was able to purchase her first house through an affordable housing program for seniors, expressed gratitude for finally being able to do kitten fostering in her home. Another person described her house as “nothing fancy...but the American Dream to the blue-collar working-class families who populated this end of town for many, many years.” Multiple people recalled a feeling of instant connection with their home the first time they saw it, and others talked about how their residence serves as a social space, or as a setting for important life events.

Boundaries is a significant code, and was created after noticing how often participants mention the physical boundedness of St. Johns as a character defining feature. This overlaps with the *Separate/Underdog* code in the *St. Johns Narrative/Imaginary* category, illustrating how the physical dimension creates and reinforces the conceptual one. One person poetically described the significance of these boundary elements in this context as “the pride is literally in the veins of the landscape.” (06) St. Johns’ geographical self-containment is not merely ideological or symbolic; the area is expected to become an island in the event of a major earthquake, when the St. Johns bridge and the overpasses are projected to collapse. The importance of this geographical configuration to the community’s self-understanding cannot be overestimated. It has contributed immeasurably to the area’s insular nature, and informed

⁶ Home is another scale studied in the place attachment literature

its culture. According to one participant, “there is a real sense of community in St. Johns. I don’t know if this springs from the geography of the place: the railroad cut and the Willamette and Columbia Rivers make us a literal island, cut off from the rest of the city.”

Other features were the rivers, natural areas, and the St. Johns Bridge, which surround the neighborhood on three sides. The most frequently mentioned border feature was the BNSF railroad right-of-way colloquially known as “The Cut,” which literally bisects the Peninsula from river to river, forming the eastern border of St. Johns. One resident characterized it as a “clear line of demarcation of where St. Johns starts,” and another called it a “classic neighborhood boundary.” Busy Fessenden Avenue is an inner-neighborhood boundary, slicing from west to east and demarcating the low-income section of town. One participant described it as a “defining feature” of the neighborhood, while another framed it in the context of her activism to implement a re-route of freight traffic, and increase safety for pedestrians crossing the street.



Figure 20: “The Cut” (REP). “This is “The Cut” that divides our neighborhood from the rest of Portland. A clear line of demarcation of where St Johns starts. I like to know I am living above the cut. It evokes imagery of a life lived well. A variation of a cut above. We here in St Johns are above the cut. There’s just something about that state of being that perfectly captures the nature of the neighborhood’s inhabitants. This place isn’t for everybody, by crossing the cut, you enter our world. Be cool, or keep moving.”

Non-verbal communication in the built environment was another popular code, encompassing everything from graffiti, to event posters, to ‘tiny libraries’. Other selections included: neighbors’ homes that are decorated for every holiday, political messages, a sidewalk swing, public art and a ‘fairy tree’ created in the median strip. These elements hold varying degrees of official sanction, and in some cases create opportunities for social interaction with strangers. As one person reflected, “things people do to decorate their homes, or in this case a tree, show personality, the sense of humor, the aesthetic desires of the people who live here. The art of a region is what makes it eclectic and electric. There are examples everywhere you look. I catch something new every day.” (27) Another participant chose two examples of intersection paintings,

explaining that they “contribute to the uniqueness of our neighborhood.” Some of these would be considered conventional 'placemaking' tactics, but even the less self-conscious elements are valued for how they contribute to sense of place and community in St. Johns.



Figure 21: Fairy tree (REP). The fairy tree was conceived of by my children and I about three years ago. The tree lives in the parking strip in front of our house, and we’ve been gradually landscaping the front yard and moved onto the parking strip. We made some tiny fairy doors and some rocks with painted words...and magically, the area transformed. We love to watch people walk by and take a look or pause to take a picture. Someone (we don’t know who) moves the tiny fairy that lives there around so that sometimes we are surprised by her location. Very magical and fun.

Idiosyncratic detail was by far the most heavily used code in this category. When I first started noticing a pattern between these selections, I wasn’t quite sure how to articulate the common thread. Gradually I noticed they were all aspects of the physical environment that were specific to St. Johns, and were not necessarily intentional in their construction. This was one of the emerging themes I found most interesting, and it relates

to Degnen's (2106) research on embodied affordances, or physical relationship with the environment through repeated use over time. Some of the 33 features identified included: a misspelled street sign; unimproved roads and alleys; memory of a sewage pipe by a childhood fishing spot; 'pirate's cove'; train tracks; the Wishing Well's palm tree neon sign and "Chinese Food Dancing" sign; an unfinished boat; "five points" intersection; chimney swifts that roost in the chimney of the St. Johns Theater; and an ivy archway on the sidewalk.

Some of these elements serve a wayfinding purpose, such as the church tower at Assumption Village that indicates to one participant that it is time to turn onto her street. Two people chose potholes on unimproved streets, which fill up with water after the rain and become playgrounds. The alleys and back roads seem to be especially defining features, giving the neighborhood what one person described as the rural feel that makes St. Johns "seems more like a small town as it originated." The person who selected the ivy arch over the sidewalk tied it into their tenure in the neighborhood, writing that it had "been around at least as long as us in the neighborhood, I think much longer." Continuing with the temporal theme, they express hope that it will survive new construction coming to the adjacent empty lot. These sentiments of apprehension about change are echoed in some of the mentions of Ivy Island, the traffic berm that was controversially eliminated in a street realignment the previous year. One of the participants who was most apprehensive about neighborhood change also selected several of these features, and I

suggest a connection between habitual use, deep knowledge of the environment, and place-protective behavior or sentiment.



Figure 22: Alley with puddles (REP). “It’s an unimproved road so when it rains the potholes will fill up with water and reflections of the sky and telephone cables and the puddles will be fun to jump into.”



Figure 23: The Overpass at George Middle school crossing on Columbia (REP). “This overpass brings me many memories, good and bad I suppose. My friends and I would skate down the overpass in the summer and sled down the overpass in the winter. Lots of time hanging out here. I feel like its days are numbered though. It doesn’t really represent the best option to cross Columbia Blvd safely for everyone. One time I was with a group of friends that threw rocks of the overpass. We were all caught and given a pretty serious lecture by local police. I actually never through any rocks I was too scared, but the other kids my age sure did.”



Figure 24: Criss cross alleys (REP). The two criss cross alleys behind my home were one of the enduring things I loved about this home. It was a view I enjoyed as I would smudge (my Native spiritual cleansing) while on my backyard deck. It was like a sliver of the country in the middle of our neighborhood. In fact, I had two alleys, one going north and south and one east and west, so I had two alleys in a community of alleys.

3. Cognitions and Affect

<i>Parent code</i>	<i>Child code</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Affective statements	(See Appendix A)	157	
Attitude/Belief	(See Appendix A)	59	
Changes		82	
	Apprehension/sadness	24	12
	Mixed feelings	5	4
	Neutral/Descriptive	25	15
	New wave St. Johns	8	5
	Supportive/optimistic	20	14
Values		151	
	Advocacy & Activism	47	16
	Community	66	26
	Small businesses	38	21

Table 8: Cognitions and Affect codes

This category deals with affective and cognitive dimensions of relationship to place. *Affective statements* and *Attitude/Belief* are both illuminating in what they reveal, but they focus more on individual psychology and style of articulation, rather than the meanings and attachments themselves. For this reason, those codes will be discussed in Appendix A. *Changes* is also outside of the what/why/how of my research questions, but is relevant in the context of neighborhood change. Though change was not mentioned in the instructions or recruitment materials, it was a frequent topic in the participant texts. The three most-used child codes were *Apprehension/sadness*, *Neutral/descriptive*, and

Supportive/optimistic, and they were were mentioned a similar number of times by similar numbers of people, indicating a spectrum of attitudes toward change.

Apprehension/sadness was most frequently used for people who grew up in the neighborhood, who are renters, and who are in the 60-69 age group. It was applied fairly evenly across gender, and location to the north or south of Fessenden. One participant reported feeling so impacted by the change that had already occurred, she was unable to complete the 12 photos in the exercise. Of Anna Banana's coffee shop she wrote, "this place is a funky/friendly reminder of what St. Johns used to feel like," and characterized change as "metastatic in nature - a brusque destruction of the neighborhood narrative replaced by a out-of-state developer's narrative of no-place." She closed her text with the conclusion, "rest in peace is a good descriptor for the St. Johns which no longer exists."

Other anxieties range from the neighborhood losing its working class character, to residential displacement and diminishing racial and economic diversity. Some participants frame their commentary in a more detached objective tone, like the participant who wrote "many of the long time residents are horrified by the many new apartment complexes that are beginnings to tower over town." One participant, who grew up in the neighborhood, articulated a fear of losing the plaza by describing it as a potential "travesty" for the public. Others lament the closing of specific businesses, but did not situate it in the context of wider change.



Figure 25: Central Hotel sign (REP). “This was a sweet center of town, but since the neighborhood has become gentrified, the plaza is surrounded by traffic and will soon be invisible with the new condo development going in.”

Neutral/Descriptive was applied to texts that describe various neighborhood changes, without any assigning any particular value to them. As one person explained, “St. Johns is a developing neighborhood, experiencing the growing pains of an influx of new people, business and larger buildings.” They follow that with a brief description of the Ivy Island conflict detailed in Chapter Two. Another person avoided passing judgment on the changes themselves, by focusing on strategies for creating continuity through remembering; “these places continue to change but the opportunity to talk about what they mean to me will keep them living on forever.” Some statements indicated resilience in the face of change, such as, “even as it gets surrounded by taller mixed use buildings, this place claims a space of its own, gently asserting its right to belong.” One participant, who is a self-proclaimed gentrifier, described the corner where Ivy Island used to be as ‘contentious corner’, and suggested “it’s all we can do to keep people and

the good parts of old St. Johns' here and alive where knowing change is inevitable.”

These people seem to be taking a diplomatic approach, amidst a highly controversial topic in neighborhood discourse.

Supportive/optimistic characterizes a mix of pragmatism and enthusiastic endorsement of recent changes. Of The Union development, which entailed the removal of Ivy Island, one participant wrote,

“while I believe development like this is far from ideal, I understand the necessity and inevitability that comes with it. Taken as whole, I believe this was a net benefit for the community, which can't be said for many other developments. Unfortunately, very few people share that opinion.”

Another participant's take on the Union was; “to me the influx of new people and new buildings and new visions for the neighborhood is a good thing. So many people in this neighborhood appear to fear change.” He elaborated about how it will draw new businesses and neighbors, and that he embraces this change. Another person had a hopeful outlook on change in general, writing “ I think the old St. Johns and the new St. Johns can live side by side and coexist - even thrive.” This sentiment was echoed by a participant who wrote about an instance of adaptive reuse they felt was particularly successful. To them it held promise of an approach to change that “represents the what I would like to see - change come to the neighborhood with thoughtfulness and respect for what came before.” On a more emphatic note, one person described the plaza as “sad”

and “plagued for decades by the awful 1970s remodeled anchor,” and they enthusiastically welcome the Central Lofts replacement project.

Values codes offer insight into the integrative nature of the person-place relationship, and the ways in which the “what” and “why” are intertwined. It is both an object of attachment in its own right, and the meaning of other objects of attachment. This parent code consists of three descriptive child codes: *Advocacy*, *Activism*, *Volunteerism*; *Community*; and *Small Businesses*. The first of the three was used to describe everything from neighborhood events, to the students at Roosevelt High, to the St. Johns Center for Opportunity. People discuss their own personal involvement in the community, and well as efforts they are not a part of but appreciate. The sense is that grassroots organizing and community engagement is an intrinsic part of St. Johns culture, and takes many forms. As one person described it simply, “St. Johns shows up.” She elaborated,

“Whether it's clearing mushy leaves from the sidewalks of downtown, helping preserve our amazing green spaces, working with the city around new developments and traffic updates, donating clothing to the clothing closet, stuffing our faces at Cakeluck, serving beer at the Bizarre, supporting our amazing neighborhood schools, or any of the hundreds of other ways they do it, this neighborhood shows up. Sure, it gets a bit rowdy sometimes, but it's only because people here care so damn much.”



Figure 26: Stop sign (REP). “There is a lot of messaging in St Johns that brings me a sense of comfort while walking down the streets. I notice a lot of “Stop Trump” and “Punch Nazis” handwritten messages around but also notice Mayday flyers, union flyers and community meeting flyers. The community out here is hands on and active and out in the open. The hand written messages are rarely painted over and I appreciate that. I feel like there is a common line of thinking that exists out here and the “it’s a St. Johns thing” is alive and well in regards to this aesthetic. St. Johns has a history of pulling together to stop large corporations from opening here and protesting to protect workers’ rights in general and I feel these signs are representative of that and offer me a sense of solidarity amongst the other residents.”

Community was applied 66 times and had high levels of co-occurrences with *Personal affect* (words like 'love'), *Attitude/Belief*, *Advocacy*, and *Place setting for interaction*. *Community* can take the form of official organizations and events, anonymous communication in the physical environment, sociability among neighbors, and even just a general sense of 'being together' in public spaces. The relationship with *Advocacy* in particular and the way it is framed suggests they are co-constitutive to a large extent. An example of the relationship between the two;

“The pride people have in St. Johns is what makes this community great. Strong communities can't happen without strong people. The people who volunteer their time to make this community better are every-day heroes. Some of them

are recognized through murals such as this, but most go unrecognized. I'm eternally grateful to those who do what they do out of pride for the community."

Small Businesses was originally under *Places*, but was regrouped under *Values* because of the way people framed their significance. It is not simply that a small business creates a less stressful and more convenient shopping experience, or serves some other practical function, but rather it is what small businesses represent. They serve a social function that facilitates community cohesion, and contributes to sense of place. This code is also different from the *Businesses* descriptor code mentioned previously, which functioned more as a tag to keep track of how often a business was mentioned. Instead, this code was applied to texts where the author was contextualizing a small businesses ethos as a value.

One participant wrote that it was difficult to choose a favorite, but she selected Etcetera because of the success story of how the community came together to support it after one of the owners passed away. Another person described the Comic Cave as one of his favorite businesses in the neighborhood, and attributed that not only to the services it offers, but also to its owner and his community engagement and activism. One person explained he shops at the Shamrock Market because it is "important to support our neighborhood businesses to allow the community to thrive." He added that the people who run the store are "friendly and always ready to engage in conversation. Although they may not live in the neighborhood, they are an important part of the community."

Developing relationships over time with business owners and staff was mentioned frequently. A participant selected the Salty Teacup because it represents “the intersection between commerce and community,” and she also noted she has never lived somewhere where she has “been on a first-name basis with so many neighborhood shop owners and neighbors.” This code provides valuable insight into the ways that small businesses, and the people who work there, comprise an important portion of the social fabric in St. Johns.

4: Continuity Through Place

<i>Parent code</i>	<i>Child code</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Biographical		117	
	Childhood place memory	46	11
	Historical family places	13	6
	Multi-generational use	14	8
	Narrative place memory	44	23
Embodied relationship		28	17
Habitual use		128	36
Historical continuity		19	12
Seasonal continuity		51	29
Sensory		26	14

Table 9: Continuity through place codes

Continuity through place is one of the most conceptual code categories, and illuminates how place meanings and processes of place attachment formation are

intertwined. It also addresses the roles of time and space, and how they interact, deepening attachment over time.

Biographical elements surfaced frequently in these texts. These are anything that concern how a place has played a role in someone's life story, and is generally articulated by recounting memories. It is broken into four child codes; *Multi-generational use*, *Historical family places*, *Childhood place memory*, and *Narrative place memory*. The reason childhood memories are separated into their own category is because they tend to make stronger impressions and be intrinsic to identity formation (Altman & Low, 1992).

Multi-generational use describes a connection to place through a temporal dimension, based on use over time by both the participant and a family member. This was most commonly the participant and their child, but there are also a few instances of grandparents or parents. Participants who grew up in the neighborhood frequently mentioned multi-generational use in their place descriptions. *Historical family places* refers to places that have a significance through association with familial history. This is very closely related to *Multi-generational use*, but in this case the relationship does not come from the participant's own experience. More broadly, several people simply mentioned how many generations of their family have lived in the area. Places with an ancestral connection include; an historic pioneer cemetery, a dairy, former family homes, the Portway Tavern, and Roosevelt High School.



Figure 27: Pier Park pool (REP). “I attended all sorts of classes here as a kid and played many an afternoon in the old boat shaped sandbox that's long gone. Then, brought my own kids for classes and so many free lunches in the park, so many hot days spent in the wading pool, so many apples from the that one tree that finally fell after a very long and fruit filled life. We (were) at the first movies in the park too, when it was on the side of a big moving truck!”



Figure 28: Cathedral Park in the snow (REP). “My Grandma’s dad went across the bridge on his horse the day the bridge opened in 1929. I grew up with stories of the riverboats my family used to get back and forth from Linnton to SJ and to Sauvie Island and Scappoose.”

The memory codes were both heavily used, and childhood memories range a gamut of topics, and level of detail. Some are more focused on perception, such as, “Pier Park always held a little scary place in us kids’ hearts. And maybe that was its appeal. We never went in after dark.” Another participant described a habitual activity, and its relevance to his adult life; “Our father had a garden at the back of her house. He allowed me to assist him and taught me the arts of digging and planting collards and turnip greens during the spring and summer months. In this way, as well as picking strawberries and beans at Alderman’s Farms, I developed a green thumb.” The same participant selected Roosevelt High School, initially because his brother went there, but this association lead to larger observations about race in Portland; “These Rough Rivers put out some very good football teams. At the annual Jamborees held at Multnomah Stadium, when teams were introduced and players ran onto the football field, it was easy to discern where different racial groups lived in the city of Portland which was highly segregated.”

Another participant found the act of taking the photograph itself triggered memories. She completed the activity the day before moving out of state, and reflected, “the moment my cheeseburger arrived, the memories I’d had at Pattie’s started playing in my mind. From lunch dates with my brother to asking my best friend to her prom, it really felt like a chapter of my life was closing.” For participants who spent some portion of their childhood in or around St. Johns, these places have meaning because they play a role in the foundational years of their lives. They are more than just places, but backdrops for formative experiences. For one person, Pier Park still carries that memory of its

childhood connotation with danger; for another, Pattie's Home Plate is a mnemonic device for vignettes of her teenage years; and a house in north St. Johns used to contain a garden where one participant worked with his father in the soil many years ago, and learned to love gardening.



Figure 29: Pier Park (REP). Even though we were flashed by an idiot man when we were 8 & 9 years old and I would, at 16 be raped in this park, it remains one of the most beautiful and precious places from my childhood.

Narrative place memory refers to memories from adult years. In some instances, there is one stand out event that takes precedence, for example, “our son was born right here in our living room!” or “years ago, a movie occurred on Lombard, and my brother drove one of his restored Cosmopolitan cars in the movie.” Other places hold many memories over time. One participant selected Roosevelt High School, and remembered dodgeball tournaments, volunteering at community socials, and watching a TedX Talk

there. Someone else wrote about a crosswalk by their home, and the memories it held of raising her grandchild and crossing it to reach his school;

“...how many times did I cross that intersection for Run-for-the-Arts, how many times did I cross that intersection for school conferences, IEP meetings, breakfast & coffee with other parents, meetings with the principal, how many times did my grandson cross that intersection to go to school and come home, once in tears when his artwork was tossed in the trash by his art teacher...Many experiences of an intersection that will always be in my fond memories.”

In this case, this seemingly mundane idiosyncratic detail has become meaningful through years of memories associated with her grandson.



Figure 30: Kelley Point Park trail (REP). “I always think of KPP (as we call it at home) as ground zero for love. My husband proposed to me at the point on a frigid winter’s night when planes were flying so low we could see the passenger’s reading material. We had our wedding celebration at the park. The convergence of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers has been a metaphor for our marriage. It is beautiful, functional, natural and a big part of my everyday life.”

Continuity through place is a multifaceted code category, in that many excerpts are associated with multiple child codes, revealing how the various aspects are related and intertwined. For example, this text was assigned *multi-generational use*, *sensory*, and *childhood place memory*. All of those elements are mutually reinforcing, and co-create the meaning of this place for the participant;

“When I was younger I used to rollerblade down the hill very, very slowly. I most recently rollerbladed down the hill just a couple years ago, it’s a pretty wild feeling. When it snows I take my family to the Hill to sled down it. Last year’s Winter season my son and I were the first to slide down the Hill in the early morning hours.”

In this instance, his relationship with this idiosyncratic feature of the neighborhood’s topography is given meaning by (1) childhood memories, (2) the sensory impression of the ‘wild feeling’, (3) the experience of repeating this activity with his son.

The other child codes in this category are *Embodied relationship*, *Habitual use*, *Historical continuity*, *Seasonal continuity*, and *Sensory*. All of these look at slightly different aspects of this construct, and many overlap. *Historical continuity* relates to impersonal connections with local history, such as interest in how the bridge was built, or St. Johns’ industrial legacy. *Habitual use* is inspired by Seamon's (1980) 'time-space routines', which "describe(s) automatic, daily routines performed in specific places, which he viewed as the basis for the existential relationship between people and places" (Lewicka, 2014, p. 52). *Habitual use* was one of the most frequently used codes, which suggests it is a fundamental way people form bonds with their environment:

“We live a few blocks away from the library and stop in several times a week. I stop by to pick up books and to go to the children’s Spanish story and song group. Fritz and Papa go to Book Babies on Friday mornings.”

“I hang out with my friends at Cathedral Park when there’s nowhere else to go. We meet there day or night. During the day, we can see the great bridge and the Willamette River with the hills in the back. We usually take pictures there with each other or of the bridge (we can never take enough pictures of the bridge).”

“We go there at least once a week, and it feels like an essential part of what ‘home’ is.”



Figure 31: Boat launch (REP). “There’s docks, on the right sight of cathedral park. I spent nearly my entire summer with friends there. I love talking with my friends while overlooking the water. If I have nothing else to do, I’ll take them to cathedral park and then to the docks. Something about the river, stars, and docks elicits very good conversations with my friends. I love laying on the docks and looking at the stars (wow all of this sounds so cheesy). I think you get the point: I like the docks and I like star gazing.”

Embodied relationship describes habitual use that is explicitly physical in nature.

Attention to the physical aspect of spatial routines in memory is in the vein of Dengen's (2016) ethnographic work with elderly residents of a village in the United Kingdom. She found that people often used details about preferred walking paths, wayfinding points,

and stairs when recalling either discrete narrative memories or habitual routines. This code was applied concurrently with *Habitual Use* to any excerpt fitting that description, with a total of 28 co-occurrences. One participant described his long-time practice of running up and down the stairs under the St. Johns Bridge; another said, “when we walk into town, we often cut through the playground and see people we know - it’s an informal check in place,” or “when I need a breath of fresh air I head down through Cathedral Park, enjoy the bridge, both above and below, and head to the dock to look out over the Willamette.” Likewise, *Sensory* was used for passages that included sensory language like, “we would walk in the sweltering heat to watch the same amazing movie over and over” or “anytime I pass it during the summer the kids seem to be having a great time, I love hearing their screams and laughter from the apartment.”

Seasonal continuity was another important motif in the texts. This was not an aspect I was originally looking for per the literature, but it emerged after I noticed people frequently described their use of a particular place in the context of a specific season, or various seasons. The place/time relationship is so intrinsic to place attachment, and seasons are a way humans have been experiencing and marking time for millennia, so this was an exciting discovery in the data. Many place descriptions mentioned one specific season;

"We would actually swim in the river all summer. The bridge above us, so majestic, so grand, so French. Or so I imagined, gothic and all that."

"In the artificial log jam, directly center, for two summers I have watched beavers make their home."

"We take over the middle of the street in the summer for street soccer, wiffle ball, football, and our official street game: can jam."

"I like to walk there in summer and see all of the plants and bees buzzing around and new growth. I love that it's all natural and not manicured so there are all kinds of little surprises and you have to figure out how to get around."

In some cases seasons are mentioned to mark the passage of time - as with the beaver anecdote - and in other instances seasons are relevant for the activities they connote, like playing in the street or swimming. Summer was the most frequently mentioned season by far. There were also passages that described the same location in more than one season, which offers a picture of the passing of time:

"This overpass brings me many memories, good and bad I suppose. My friends and I would skate down the overpass in the summer and sled down the overpass in the winter. Lots of time hanging out here."

"I love this tree more than any other and maybe just because it's not mine so I don't have to clean up its mess every season. (Ha!) I see it from my bedroom window and it's like an indicator of the seasons for me."

"James John used to have a huge asphalt play yard, until several charities and the Timbers Army came one summer and tore much of it out, installed playground equipment and a new mini-turf field. We have played here as a family in rain, snow, scorching heat and we have made plenty of new soccer friends."



Figure 32: Linda and Walt Myers (REP). “This home on Wall Street is owned by Linda and Walt Meyers. They are pictured here on the porch with some of their many yard decorations. They have lived in the home 52 years and Walt hauls out the tubs for each holiday and Linda covers the entire yard. I caught them on Valentine’s Day and Linda had the Easter Stuff ready to go. She then works her way through: Spring, Summer, July 4, Fall, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc. She told me they have matching cups to use for each holiday as well. I enjoy walking past here.”

5. Neighborhood Character

<i>Code</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Diverse	14	11
Historic architecture	25	13
Industrial	16	11
Reminds of home town	7	7
Scenic views	22	17
Small town feel	17	12

Table 10: Neighborhood Character codes

This category encapsulates everything that a traditional planning effort would try to capture, to define neighborhood character. The way historic architecture ties into place meanings is of particular interest from a planning and policy angle, in light of the controversial modern developments recently introduced into the neighborhood. Demolitions of historic architecture in the downtown area has not been an issue, but the increasing presence of large-scale contemporary architecture affects the overall landscape, and arguably diminishes the impact of the older buildings.

The 1913 Georgian-style library was described as helping to maintain “the small town feel of St. Johns.” Signal Station Pizza, which is located in a former service station, was mentioned many times as a successful example of adaptive reuse. One person explained, Signal Station Pizza “is a very obvious quirky landmark that gives the downtown it’s charm,” while another appreciated its art deco design. Historic architecture was also mentioned in context of neighborhood change; “I pray the community is able to weather all the upcoming changes while keeping its historic charm in tact.” Community values are another framework for understanding its importance; “Because history matters. It is important to “retain and repurpose” our historic buildings. It is important to honor our community’s heritage.” These excerpts show how historic architecture has slightly different meanings for different people, ranging from a contributor to local charm, to historic-cultural preservation as a value, to simply enjoying the aesthetics. All of these illustrate its contribution to sense of place.

Scenic views is another important attribute of neighborhood character.

Characterized by one participant as an “expansiveness and gateway feeling,” these sweeping vistas create an effect of unifying the environment and its various elements; “There is something critical about sunset on the bluff. The reflection of the sun off the Willamette and the distance above with the backdrop of Forest Park and the bridges, meeting the industrial hoots of the trains and ships passing.” Experiencing these views on a regular basis, over a period of years, is emotionally charged for many people. Words like ‘lucky’, ‘love’ and ‘grateful’ were frequently used to describe the affect. ‘Three mountain days’, or days when it’s clear enough to see all three volcanoes, are mentioned several times. That these scenic views are a unique feature of St. Johns is also significant. In this excerpt, a spiritual connection is framed in context of a participant’s Indigenous heritage:

“When I came home to the Northwest in 2001, I discovered my favorite drive in and out of St Johns....the Willamette Blvd. I fantasized about someday being able to afford a house near the curve in the Boulevard down near N. Ida, a house overlooking the Willamette River, the bridges, even Mt. Hood. I feel such a connection to the route as though maybe my Native ancestors traveled it many moons before, before houses, before University of Portland, before paved streets and lights, a simple path to visit other tribal members and travel down the Willamette Bluff to the river for fishing and canoeing. I have never seen a more breathtaking view as I come around the curve headed East, sun setting, Mt. Hood off in the distance, water glistening like diamonds....it takes me back to a simpler time in my peoples’ history...”

Like the historic character of downtown, scenic views are also increasingly threatened by new developments that encroach on sitelines.



Figure 33: Scenic views at twilight (REP). “Our community is situated close to parks and waterways. Forest Park and the St. Johns bridge used to be visible from many parts of downtown St. Johns. The views used to be accessible for everyone, and a constant reminder of where we were. After all, St. Johns has a beautiful bridge that is part of our community identity. Where Our Daily Bread used to be (Marvel 69 building now), I had an unobstructed view of the bridge and the river traffic below. Few glimpses of the bridge are possible now from downtown St. Johns, since all the new buildings have gone up. As a result, a glimpse of the bridge seems more dramatic and unexpected, and it is easy to forget that our little downtown is close to nature and our namesake bridge. I miss the views of the bridge and the distant hills of Forest Park that were always part of being in downtown St. Johns.”

6. St. Johns Narrative/Imaginary

<i>Code</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Industrial history	14	10
Shared meaning of importance	20	11
St. Johns identity	43	21
Symbolic	26	18
Underdog/Separate	13	9
Working class	6	3

Table 11: St. Johns Narrative/Imaginary codes

This code category is the most directly relevant to the socially produced meanings that underpin both individual and community attachment. It differs from *Neighborhood character* in that it is more ideological. Of the 6 codes in this category: *Industrial history*, *Underdog/Separate*, and *Working Class* are topical; and *Shared meaning of importance*, *St. Johns Identity*, *Symbolic* are conceptual. Like *Continuity through place*, many of these codes are applied concurrently, which reveals the multi-dimensional nature of this construct. For example, the following excerpt has *St. Johns Identity*, *Underdog/Separate*, and *Industrial history* applied to it:

“These two photos represent the history of St. Johns and the industrial side of our town. It’s status as its own township seems to have survived the 100+ years since it become incorporated into Portland. When asked where you live, we say “St. Johns,” not Portland.

This text shows the relationship between the industrial legacy, the perception of St. Johns as being separate, and how those factors form its socially produced identity. Another participant wrote about “old-school ideas about St. Johns,” explaining that “the train is our link to so much: transit, industry, a walking path, getting to other places in or outside of town. I’m drawn to the tracks themselves, the trains and what they’re carrying.” This text discusses the importance of the train to St. Johns' history and identity, in the context of the neighborhood's peripheral location and industrial legacy. Another person connected this to the present, through the “artisans and builders still among us and part of our neighborhood culture.” Excerpts about St. Johns identity identify a number of characteristics in addition to the aforementioned. There’s the legacy of grassroots

advocacy, “our independent streak,” local pride, a “dynamic community,” blue-collar, “quirky,” amenable to artists, strong sense of community, and a place of scenic beauty.



Figure 34: Decatur by Baltimore Woods (REP). “St. Johns is where residential, industrial, green spaces and commercial all come together. We’ve got it all. Take this part of Decatur, running along Baltimore Woods, right behind my house, straight behind Cathedral Park place. Beautiful views of the bridge and nature as well as an occasional dumping ground. A place that feels the push and pull of so many aspects of our neighborhood combining and clashing all at once.”

The majority of the excerpts coded *Symbolic* were about the St. Johns Bridge, which was no surprise: the striking emerald green suspension bridge is universally beloved, within and outside St. Johns. One person explained, “this is the star of the show. The St. Johns Bridge is the emblem of the community. If we had a community flag, the (bridge) would assuredly be a part of it.” In fact there is an unofficial St. Johns flag - recently designed by another participant’s husband - and it does indeed feature the bridge. Other people mention the bridge as a subject of local crafts and yard ornaments; as featured on the TV shows *Grimm* and *Librarian*; as the gateway to the neighborhood; and

as depicted on murals. One participant called it “our most iconic symbol of beauty and transport.” Other locations with symbolic importance were the plaza, Signal Station Pizza, the old city hall, small businesses, and an unfinished ship which “symbolizes to me the past industry related to shipping, and a connection to the St. Johns of old.” The connection with the past through the physical was a re-occurring theme.

Shared meaning of importance was used when the participant described a place's significance taken for granted. These kinds of statements can be thought of as a list of ‘givens’ about St. Johns. That is not to say that everyone would agree, but the author felt confident enough about their universal nature to state them as commonly accepted truths. This overlaps with the *Attitudes/Beliefs* code, but refers specifically to meanings. These types of statements include:

“Everyone who’s ever lived in this end of town thinks of (the St. Johns Bridge) as their very own”

“This affordable bar is a staple to a lot of people in St. Johns, it has character and you never know what to expect there.”

“The square is a very important part of St. Johns. It’s the official or unofficial central location of the downtown core...”

“The star of our neighborhood! I think everyone can agree that the bridge is absolutely beautiful. We are very lucky to live within its presence.”



Figure 35: Portaway Tavern (REP). "The Portway Tavern is a favored watering hole on Willamette Blvd. and has been for generations."

7. Social

<i>Code</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Children	51	16
Community figures	64	24
Family	23	9
Neighbors	17	9
Pets	12	8
Place setting for interaction	78	34
St. Johns Parade/Bizarre	7	7
St. Johns Review	4	3
Third spaces	9	7

Table 12: Social codes

The social interactions and relationships give meanings to places, and play a very important role in formation of place attachment. These connections expand and deepen over time, which explains the importance of length of tenure for traditional types of attachment (Lewicka, 2005; Taylor & Townsend, 1976).

Children was one of the most frequently used codes in the *Social* category, and in the study overall. This may be partially attributed to the demographics of the participant pool, but it seems clear from the data that having children adds another dimension to the person-place relationship. Perhaps it is because experiencing your environment with a child brings a new perspective and feeling of discovery. Some participants described a place in the context of their routine with their child, or how it has supported them as a parent. Even a few participants who do not have children expressed enjoyment at seeing them playing outside. The presence of children also seemed to make things more memorable, for example, “we took my children to their first movie there...I’ll never forget how magical it was for them,” or “my son sat on a limb of one of these old trees, watching a lunar eclipse late on summer night. My other son practiced soccer with his friends as the sun set over Portland’s newest park.” *Multi-generational use* also overlaps here, as people experience continuity through sharing childhood places with their own children.

A recurring theme was how St. Johns is a good place to raise children, for a number of reasons: the myriad of available activities, access to nature, and sense of community.

For those with older children, there are mentions of how enjoyable it has been to watch them move through different phases of childhood in the neighborhood. Writing about the now-shuttered Tulip Pastry, one person said “ we stopped for donut holes while the kids were young, and then they graduated to sprinkle donuts and maple bars...they created birthday cakes for both boys ages 1-6.” In this example, the personal significance of Tulip Pastry is how it has been integrated into the participant's life and their children’s lives over the years, and even served to mark the passage of time as the children graduated from one type of sweet to another. In this way, places become bonded to their familial associations.



Figure 36: Children sledding (REP). “I wanted to include a photo of what it's meant raising my kids in St Johns because this is my greatest source of gratitude for this community...I could not have ordered up a better childhood for my kids then the daily reality of being a kid in St Johns. How many houses can they walk to and pick up more friends to play with? How many different outdoor activities can they decide between on any given day? How many neighborhood children have we fed with chili between sledding runs or grilled cheese between open swim times at the pool?”

Place setting for interaction does not pertain to memories of interactions that create place meanings, but rather to places that are described as having a social function. Not surprisingly, this code has many co-occurrences with the *Community*. Even the virtual public sphere was mentioned; “The first time I saw this mural, it was a picture posted on the St. Johns Facebook Page, with a spirited debate about how...one complaining neighbor resulted in the city asking for the mural to come down. I’ve never lived anywhere with such an active Facebook page...” Community boards are also mentioned as sources of information about social events. Within this, there are different ways people contextualize the social dimension of a place:

- Favorite places to visit with family and friends (Leisure, Rose City Taqueria)
- Places to converse with neighbors and acquaintances (Salty Teacup, Man’s Shop, food carts, Leisure, community garden)
- Places to be in public with strangers and experience diversity and chance encounters (Plaza, Cathedral Park, Willamette Cove)
- Third spaces like bars (Slim’s, Fixin’ To)
- Settings for annual festivals (St. Johns Bizarre, Jazz Fest)
- Places to meet new people, make friends, and feel a sense of community (community garden, Swap and Play)
- Participant’s home
- Places to perform identity or be with like-minded people (Anna Banana’s, Leisure, Bachelor’s Club, skate park)
- Temporary ‘places’ like the farmer’s market.

The way these places are described binds their function and meaning together, and thus they are both a ‘what’ and a ‘why’ of attachment. Some of these places exist solely for socializing, while some serve multiple functions, such as the Man’s Shop or the Salty Teacup.



Figure 37: Marie's Bar sign (REP). "Marie's is a place where I have found like-minded people mostly, who are cool, and who help fill the friendship void left by all the people I grew up with who left."

Community figures was another popular attribute. These individuals are often business owners or employees, in which case the code may overlap with *Community* and *Small Business* in the *Values* category. They are also community organizers and activists, non-profit workers, artists, post office employees, librarians, and the editor of the *St. Johns Review*. Several participants even wrote about neighbors who decorate their homes for every holiday.



Figure 38: Rocky Beaches (REP). “More neighborhoods need their own fencing studios. St Johns does. Rocky Beach, who runs the club has been involved in Oregon Fencing for decades. I met Rocky at my first fencing tournament in the early 90’s, and knew him as someone who had trained with my fencing coach for years before that. The club doesn’t get the traffic that it used to, but every time I walk by it, I hope to see people fencing. It represents the kind of business that needs a little extra love.”



Figure 39: Anita and Dub (REP). “Dubs might be my favorite restaurant in St. Johns. It’s some of the most amazing comfort food out there. It’s the go to spot for catfish or chicken and waffles or brisket with a side of mac n cheese with greens. Beyond how good the food tastes, Dub and Anita are amazing. Every time that one of the schools needs food for a fund raiser, or an individual needs help after a tragedy, Dub and Anita are there. They epitomize business owners who give back.”



Figure 40: Tom and Chris Stubblefield (REP). “Tom Stubblefield was first introduced to me as the “unofficial mayor of St. Johns.” But after living here for a handful of years I think we should just make it official. These two show up to everything, plaza clean-ups, holiday pub crawls, planting along Lombard, working the emergency warming shelters. There's nothing they wouldn't do, or haven't already done for this neighborhood. And there is no one I could think of who would better represent how connected neighbors are to this place. Even if we haven't lived here for all our lives like our Mayor, it's a place that anyone can feel like they belong, that anyone can call home.”

(End of findings)

Chapter VI: Discussion

1. Introduction

The purpose of this research is to determine the meanings that underpin place attachment among residents of St. Johns, and to gain a nuanced understanding of sense of place in the area. My research questions are: What are the objects of attachment, and why (i.e. what are the place meanings)? Through what processes (how) are attachments formed? In what ways do the 'how' and 'why' intertwine? What are the commonalities across different variables, and how do those gesture at a holistic St. Johns essence, or sense of place?

City planning documents and newspaper articles have used language like “distinctive local identity” and “small town feel” for decades to describe St. Johns, but there has been little definition of what those constructs actually mean. This research aims to identify the components of sense of place, and contribute to planning efforts and grassroots advocacy, and engage more residents in guiding St. Johns’ future. Understanding the processes through which attachment is formed is significant from a planning perspective, because the process and meaning are often intertwined, and this can illuminate the significance of features that may appear inconsequential to an outsider.

Here is how the codes can be grouped relative to the research questions about the ‘what, why, and how’ of place attachment:

What

- Amenities
- Built and Natural Environment
- Values (community, activism)
- Neighborhood character (historic buildings, industrial)
- Social spaces (third spaces, place setting for interaction, St. Johns Parade and Bizarre, neighbors, community figures)

Why

- Amenities meet needs and desires
- Continuity through place (biographical, historical continuity)
- St. Johns narrative/Imaginary gives sense of identity
- Social use (places for interaction with children, family, pets, neighbors)
- Communal values resonate with personal values

How

- Habitual use/Embodied relationship/Sensory
- Seasonal continuity
- Biographical significance
- Social (interactions in place form place meaning)

2. Relationship between the ‘what, why and how’

In its most basic form, the causal relationship between elements in the attachment process can be explained like this:

Community figures like owner of the Man’s Shop (what) are important to the participant’s attachment to St. Johns because they create a sense of community, and of continuity with St. Johns’ past (why). This cognition and affect is formed through repeated encounters with the person, in the setting of their shop (how).

This is a straightforward example, but as can be seen above, many of the codes and code categories overlap. It is impossible to designate some of them as performing only

one function, which illuminates the nature of their reciprocal and nested relationship. In some ways this is reminiscent of early sense of place literature by phenomenologists, who felt that the person-place relationship was far too complex to be separated into constituent parts and variables. I agree with this epistemology to an extent, but I also believe these findings provide helpful insight into how various elements are interrelated and mutually supportive. For example, having a childhood memory of regularly visiting a swimming pool is both a ‘how’ and a ‘why’: the subject has identified the association as the source of their affection for the place, so in that sense it is the meaning. At the same time, the habitual use is also *how* the attachment to the place developed. This illustrates how the process and the meaning are intertwined, to form and sustain attachment.

Social is another category that has a mutually reinforcing relationship between object, meaning, and process. According to multiple descriptions by participants, the Fixin’ To is a ‘third space’; a place for social for interaction with neighbors and friends, and an amenity that offers desirable food options and live music. It is also owned by people who actively participate in community organizing by lending the space for use in these activities, which refer to values of *Community* and *Advocacy*. This illustrates the capacity of one place to hold a multitude of meanings. It also shows how the process of being - or what Heidegger would call ‘dwelling’ - in the place through repeated social interactions creates both meanings and attachment. This is supported by Cross’ (2015) sociological interactionist perspective; "Place attachments are created in the intersection

of experience and meaning, which occur simultaneously through several processes and at the individual, interpersonal, cultural level" (p. 9).

This level of complexity may be why it is so difficult for people to articulate their relationship with place, and why it is important to their well-being to be able to stay in their home and neighborhood. Gentrification discourse is heavily focused on the emotional and material turmoil of displacement, but without understanding what places actually mean to people who live there, how can we have a sense of full scope of impact and how it can be mitigated? This research can bridge that gap for both public sector employees of agencies like BPS and PBOT, and for stakeholder advocates, by honing in on constituent parts of place and illustrating the value of the person-place relationship. I discuss proposed policy interventions and community applications of these findings in the Conclusion chapter.

3. Types of meaning and attachment: similarities and difference across demographics

Cross (2015) seven typologies of meaning were one of the frameworks the guided my coding and analysis. These interact at the individual, group, and cultural levels to form place attachment, and focuses on how place meanings are socially created and maintained. Her typologies are; Sensory (embodied), narrative (cultural imaginary), historical (personal or family/friends), spiritual, ideological (moral, ethical, legal commitment to place), commodifying (assessing place based on a set of desirable traits),

material dependence (reliance on social resources or features). Some of these grow over time and some are static, and an individual's attachment can be informed by some or all of these. The four typologies which are most pertinent among participants are in my study are Ideological (*Values*), Narrative (*St. Johns Narrative/Imaginary*), Historical (*Biographical, Habitual Use*), and Commodifying (*Amenities*).

The participants who were more heavily invested in amenities tended to be residents with a shorter tenure. This makes sense when thinking in the context of an individual or family looking to purchase or rent a home in an area with a bundle of goods and services that best suits their needs and wants. Of the participants who indicated that downtown St. Johns reminds them of their hometown, 80 percent were residents with 3-5 years of tenure.⁷ For the amenity child codes, *Walkable*, *Food Options*, *Small Town Feeling*, and *Live music/Nightlife*, that same group comprised at least 44 percent of responses - well above any other group. This offers a picture of the type of qualities that make St. Johns appealing to newcomers. This is not to suggest that the individuals who expressed an amenity-based attachment do not have some kind of biographical place meanings as well, or that people with a lengthy tenure do not appreciate St. Johns from an amenity perspective. However, those two categories tended to correspond more closely with length of tenure than any of the other typologies, which is consistent with Stedman's (2006) theory that type of attachment differs depending on type of user.

⁷ All percentages are normalized to adjust for discrepancies in demographics

Stedman's (2006) theory is also expressed through the relationship between length of tenure and attitude towards change. 100 percent of *Supportive/Optimistic* code applications were people who did not grow up in St. Johns, and 83 percent were homeowners. Likewise, 78 percent of *Apprehension/Sadness* code applications were for people who grew up in the neighborhood, and 73 percent were renters. That recent homebuyers would be supportive of changes which would increase (or at least preserve) their equity while increasing favorable amenities is not surprising, and corresponds to Brown-Saracino's (2009) 'homesteader' typology. As Brown-Saracino writes, homesteaders express an appreciation for the built environment and neighborhood character as an amenity, but an openness to change as long as it's the 'right' kind, i.e. small boutique shops and restaurants rather than chain stores. This is not to say there was no anxiety about change from more recent residents; participants in the 3-5 year bracket accounted for 20 percent of *Apprehension/Sadness* code applications. The relationship between homeownership and attitude toward change is interesting, since most of the excerpts did not specifically mention affordability. I propose further research on in this area, to understand how renters perceive and react differently to neighborhood change than homeowners.

'Ideological' meanings (one of Cross' seven typologies) are expressed through appreciation for values like *Community*, which was mentioned more frequently by residents in the 3-5 year residency bracket. This group comprised 41 percent of excerpts with this code, and 95 percent of this code application was for people who did not grow

up in St. Johns. However, the other two *Value* codes of *Advocacy/Activism* and *Small Businesses* were more evenly spread among the different tenure brackets, which may suggest that ‘community’ as a term is more likely to be deployed by a certain demographic, but its constituent parts are still valued by other residents. In other words, it might be a difference of language and framing. These findings correspond with Hummon’s (1992) two types of rootedness among place-attached individuals; everyday and ideological. These differ in the level of self-consciousness “with which individuals think about the community and their relation” to it (p. 263).

Cross and Hummon use the term in slightly different ways, but in this instance they overlap. An ideological attachment/sense of place is consistent with the use of labels like ‘community’ and ‘walkability’ to describe positive aspects of the environment. With ideological rootedness, “sentiments are situated within a perspective that is highly favorable, often comparative with other communities” (ibid, p. 265). Thus, certain characteristics may be described as amenities. In my research, residents with 3-10 years of tenure expressed this self-conscious appreciation for community (and other related elements like small businesses and community figures) through the use of affective language like ‘lucky’ and ‘grateful’, comprising over 60 percent of all uses of those words. People who have spent a longer time in the neighborhood might not have as much (or any) experience living in other places, and they may take these characteristics for granted to some extent, or at least not use those kinds of labels, as they are so familiar.

Codes that would fall under Cross' Narrative category were more evenly distributed across different variables. People who had lived in St. Johns as little as three years mentioned St. Johns' distinctive identity, more than any other tenure bracket. They were lower however on Industrial History and Underdog/Separate, which were all more popular with residents of greater tenure, suggesting those participants articulate identity in a different way. This difference in perception may also relate to Hummon's ideological vs. everyday rootedness, as discussed above. The Working-Class code was overwhelmingly applied to renters, at 88 of excerpts, and none of them were people who had lived in the neighborhood less than six years. This suggests that St. Johns' working class identity may not be as significant to homeowners and more recent arrivals to the neighborhood. This may have a connection to socioeconomic changes of recent years, and a new demographic that does not identify with the working class. Diversity was also highly valued by renters, at 73 percent. In the *Neighborhood Character* category, which would fall somewhere between Narrative and Commodifying in Cross' framework, there were some noticeable discrepancies by age. *Historic Architecture*, *Scenic Views*, and *Diversity* all scored significantly higher with participants between the ages of 70-79 than any other group. These differences shed light on the plurality of senses of place that exists among different place-attached individuals.

6. Processes of meaning-making: the 'how' of attachment

The role of time is intrinsic to the process of meaning making and attachment formation, and is represented in my analysis by the *Continuity Through Place* category.

This is not to say that attachment cannot be formed in a short period, such as during a vacation, but the type of place relationship that develops over time is of a different nature. Place attachment has a temporal aspect that connects the present to the past, through individual biographical connection or shared history (Lewicka, 2014). Rowles (1990) refers to this dimension as ‘autobiographical insidedness’. Connection to place through time can also be forged by learning about the history of one’s new place, particularly as embodied in the built environment (Lewicka, 2014, 2008). Lewicka (2014) calls this ‘declarative semantic memory’, and it presents “a means through which a newcomer may feel a part of the place’s history” (ibid, p. 54).

Lewicka’s (2014) constructs of ‘episodic declarative memory’ and ‘procedural memory’ are more apt to my study. Procedural memory is a rephrasing of Seamon’s (1980) ‘time-space routines’, which describes repeated actions performed in the same space. This corresponds to the *Habitual Use* code, which was one of the most frequently applied in my study. People who have lived in the neighborhood for over 40 years made up the highest percentage of this code application. Connerton (2009) describes this lived knowledge as; “to ‘live’ an artifact is to appropriate it, to make it one’s own” (p. 32), and this type of relationship is intrinsically dependent on time. Not surprisingly, *Idiosyncratic Detail* showed a strong positive correlation with length of tenure, suggesting that appreciation for these features of the physical environment deepens with time, as they become a part of one’s routine. Degnen’s (2016) construct of ‘embodied affordances’ is very similar to procedural memory, but with an emphasis specifically on the physicality

of the routine. This was represented by the *Embodied Relationship* code, to refer to texts where participants described walking or some other activity where they move through space. There were 28 instances of *Habitual Use* code applications that were also *Embodied Relationship*, and 10 that overlapped with *Sensory*. This suggests that the physical dimension of repeated use is a significant part of its role in attachment formation.

Episodic declarative memory corresponds with *Narrative Memories* and *Childhood Memories*. Many participants who wrote about narrative memories mentioned more than one per place, creating a snapshot of its use and role in their life over time. There were also some people who chose one stand-out memory, like getting married or engaged, as the highlight of their relationship with that particular location. What is interesting to note is how much overlap there is between this type of memory and habitual use, especially for childhood memories. There were 13 code co-applications for *Narrative place memory* and *Habitual Use*, and 29 for *Childhood memory* and *Habitual Use*. For example, “we passed (the mill) while headed for the Columbia River to fish off the bank on an old capsized vessel at a spot that was called Swift,” or “the pool was always the place to be all summer long. My brother and I would walk there in nothing but our bathing suits and a towel draped around the shoulders, a quarter in hand for payment.” I propose that the combination of procedural and episodic declarative memory, especially occurring in childhood, is especially potent for forming place attachment. As such, place relationships that develop over a long period of time have a depth and value that cannot be replaced.



Figure 41: Main Street (REP). “All of Main Street: where there was once a very nice Pharmacy Fountain, a 5 & Dime, old antique thrift stores and an aquarium store. The Salvation Army, where I bought all my clothes with babysitting money. Catching the bus daily in the main square in the morning, returning at dusk or night, seeing my little town at the beginning of its day and then again at the end. Rain or shine, cold and hot. It was home. Still is.”

5. The ‘what’ and ‘why’: towards a holistic sense of place in St. Johns

Though there are different types of place meanings for different residents - which vary by demographics as much as personal difference - there are some common meanings and values found in this research:

1. *Public spaces like Cathedral Park, Pier Park and the Plaza.* The two main functions these spaces serve are; as places for social interaction, whether with friends, neighbors, at events, or just ‘being together’ with the community; and as recreation opportunities, which include everything from swimming to a skatepark.
2. *Legacy business.* There were described by many participants has having friendly proprietors, useful goods and services, contributing to local character, and a giving sense of continuity to place.

3. *Connection to nature, in the form of scenic views and proximity to natural areas.* This was deeply felt, as expressed through frequent use of affective language. Participants also expressed a strong connection to the Willamette, and to a lesser extent the Columbia River.
4. *Small businesses.* These need not necessarily be legacy businesses, but ones that have sociable staff, participate in community-building, and provide useful goods and services that present an alternative to chain establishments. The mutually supportive relationship between small businesses and the community is evident in posts like this, from Anna Banana's coffee shop, on the St. Johns Facebook group: "Someone broke out our front door glass early this morning. I would like to thank the many St Johns folks who called 911. This meant a quick response and a limiting of damages, before our alarm company called. We will be open at 7:30am but the door will have boards on it. It's truly great that this neighborhood looks after each other" (April 28th, 2018).
5. *A sense of community.* Whether the word 'community' is actually used, or it is described through values of advocacy and engagement, knowing neighbors, or being together in public space.
6. *St. Johns' identity as a self-contained place.* Though people described the St. Johns imaginary in slightly different ways, this was one of the most consistent elements. The topography and location of St. Johns is intrinsic to this conceptualization. This geographical and cultural distinctiveness creates a perception of St. Johns as a bounded world.
7. *Main Street.* The 'small town' scale of Lombard in downtown St. Johns, and historic architecture like Signal Station Pizza and the Multnomah County Library.
8. *Industrial roots, and their manifestation in the physical environment.* Features like the train tracks and the industrial architecture of the Cathedral Park area connect St. Johnians to the past.
9. *Diversity;* of businesses, cultures, economic status, people, thought, etc.
10. *The people.* Much like the social dimension that gives so many places meaning, the people in the neighborhood add texture to life there. Whether it is a business or a public facility like a library, the people who spend time there - through employment or otherwise - add value and create sense of community and place.

These findings speak to the literature gap identified by Manzo and Perkins (2006) between place attachment research and planning research. As they point out, the former often focuses on the individual's experience, whereas the latter looks at community

engagement and organizing structures, but rarely at place meanings and attachments that motivate action. Understanding socially-produced meanings and the nuances of sense of place can inform both the planners and the community about what should be prioritized.

Conclusion

The list above illustrates how sense of place is composed of a myriad of elements which overlap, and are mutually reinforcing. Place is a complex ecosystem, where even small changes have the potential to make substantial impacts, for better or worse. For example, a change in zoning on Fessenden would have the effect of valorizing property, which may result in small businesses closing, which would impact the social fabric that those proprietors and employees are a part of. Similarly, a development on the plaza will inevitably change the character of that public space, and possibly its use as well. Given the importance of that place as a setting for social interaction and events, what is built on that lot is of great importance to the neighborhood from a number of angles.

My findings on how process and meanings are intertwined are significant because they illuminate the importance of time. Place is deeply embedded in our psyches through repetition and routine, as well as narrative memories, and for longer-term residents, holds their personal biographies in physical form. I propose that an environment laden with place meanings like this is simply not reproducible, and thus its use value to the inhabitant is not quantifiable or measurable, and can not be translated into exchange value. This suggests that loss of place can affect a person in ways discourse that focuses

on the material aspects of residential displacement may not typically consider. Fullilove's (2005, 2013) concept of 'root shock' addresses these impacts among low-income populations, by examining the mental health and social repercussions of forced serial displacement. Urban renewal and other large infrastructure projects that entail a dramatic reconfiguration of the environment can also be devastating for this reason, as they threaten a sense of identity and continuity.

Continuity through place can also be of value to newer residents, who can use history and local identity as a means to connect with their neighborhood. Lewicka (2014) writes about how an interest in the past may foster a "sense of personal and place continuity and may facilitate attachment to new places among mobile individuals" (p.49). Considering that place attachment is one of the most consistent variables associated with community engagement, I propose that a strong sense of place is also of value for healthy communities.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

Walking west Lombard in the late morning sun, people are beginning to set up lawn chairs and blankets on the curb. Some of the chairs have tiny American flags placed on them, waiting to be waved. Walking past Anarres Anarchist Community Space, the Samoan church, the Beer Garden, and Ace Hardware, it seems like all of the neighborhood is here. Children of all races play in the street, drawing on the asphalt with chalk and blowing bubbles, while adults squeeze themselves into the shade of small trees. People wear t-shirts and hats that say “enjoy St. Johns.” It is parade day. The sound of marching bands tuning recedes into the distance. A man with a giant bundle of inflatable novelties and cotton candy is stationed on the corner. The parade begins much like the St. Johns bridge opened; a fire engine with a wailing siren leads the charge, followed by law enforcement. After this, a steady stream of city officials, rose princesses, and classic cars. Even the governor of Oregon is making the pilgrimage up Lombard. The Citizen of The Year’s car stalls and several people jump up to push it, dissolving the tense moment into relieved laughter. The Tall People’s Club is here, and the clowns too. Local groups like the St. Johns Hooligans and the St. Johns Ballet Folklorico promenade in line with the ladies of the Kenton Women’s Village and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Hometown heroes, the Roosevelt High School marching band, draw big applause. A solitary woman careens through the intersection of Lombard and Jersey wearing a giant white model of the bridge and a sunflower print dress. This is parade day. This is St. Johns.

The early cultural geographers were right; sense of place is more than the sum of its constituent parts. It is the complex interplay and reciprocal relationship between all of the elements that gives a place its ineffable essence. That is why it is so crucial to consider how every change has the potential to disturb this delicate ecosystem, composed of so many tiny elements. Whether it is a local institution like the Man's Shop, a powerful symbol like the St. Johns Bridge, or something as minute as an ivy arch over a sidewalk, each of these things comprise an important piece of a whole. As developers flock to the area to capitalize on Portland's housing shortage, and on the amenities and charm of the neighborhood, St. Johns is in the midst of a major socioeconomic transition that is threatening its identity. Yes, change is natural and inevitable, but it is the degree and nature of change with which we can contend.

These changes are fraught with deep community anxiety on both a material and ideological level, which is expressed in traditional public forums like the neighborhood association meetings, and in the virtual public sphere of Facebook. One thing almost everyone can agree on is that they love St. Johns, and want the best for the neighborhood and community. As illustrated in my research, there are a list of basic characteristics that make up St. Johns' character and identity, and this is the common ground. However, people have different ideas of what the future should look like, how much modernization and change is desirable, and what to preserve. This is the divergence, and much of the source of community conflict.

In light of recent divisions within the more active contingent of the community, working on those efforts and building alliances and understandings “across party lines” will be crucial for guiding change in a positive way. This does not mean that everyone will agree, but the more these dialogues about the future can be held in *advance* of a large project or policy, the better prepared community advocates will be to respond. St. Johnsians can accomplish amazing things when they work together, and many residents are already engaged in this kind of bottom-up planning, whether it is petitioning ODOT for a road redesign, securing funding for a STEM facility at Roosevelt High School, or caretaking green spaces like the Baltimore Woods. The need for creative solutions to articulate shared values and goals is one of the reasons the REP method appealed to me. My research aims to facilitate community conversations about the fundamental values, vision for the future, and strategy, by articulating shared place meanings. In addition to this internal application, the data collected in my research is both visual and narrative, and will be publicly available for the community to draw from. It is my hope that these photographs and images can serve as an advocacy tool for stakeholders in spatial struggles, especially in the realm of social preservation.

As I have shown, St. Johns’ residents are one of its greatest assets, and one of the most important components of sense of place. Their attachment may motivate them to engage with their community, which ironically creates the very value that makes the neighborhood attractive for development. People seem to be especially friendly and open to conversation in St. Johns, which is unusual in a city. This is one of the characteristics

that comprises the ubiquitous ‘small town feel’, which means that social preservation is of great importance to sustaining all that makes St. Johns, St. Johns. This entails mitigating commercial and residential gentrification as a high priority, and creating and maintaining opportunities for community engagement and socializing, like community centers and viable public spaces.

To address (1) the importance of people to sense of place and socially-produced place meanings in St. Johns, and (2) the value of place attachment and continuity through place to individuals, advocacy, planning and policy need to focus on creative social preservation strategies. Residents at neighborhood association meetings and on other forums frequently express concern about displacement, but there are virtually no mechanisms in place to prevent it. Preserving ‘naturally occurring affordable housing’ where people already live should be the first priority. Overturning the statewide ban on rent control ordinances and enacting that policy in the City of Portland is probably the single most impactful step that can be taken. Affordable housing bond funds could also be used to purchase existing affordable housing and convert it to limited-equity co-ops, or income-based housing through partnership with a CDC.

To increase the amount of new affordable housing being built, a special ‘social preservation overlay zone’ could be created, which would mandate more affordable units per project than currently required by the inclusionary zoning ordinance. In light of the importance of small businesses to sense of place and place meanings, affordable

commercial space in new projects is also important, and could be achieved with Community Benefit Agreements. This would require a policy change, as CBAs are currently not mandatory on projects budgeted at under \$25 million.

Equitable advocacy structures

Revisiting the neighborhood association system with an emphasis on inclusivity is also essential. Currently members tend to be mainly white, over 30, and homeowners. The neighborhood association is aware of this and has expressed a desire to change those demographics. I suggest hiring a part-time outreach person through the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, who can focus on communities of color that reside mainly north of Fessenden. The objective would be to bring the concerns of these residents to the table, and create a strong neighborhood coalition that can negotiate with developers on behalf of an agenda that benefits all of St. Johns. The support of the neighborhood association and other stakeholder groups will be crucial in facilitating this process. I recommend public events like potlucks and picnics as a means of creating relationships and social cohesion across the physical and cultural socioeconomic divide.

In light of my findings on neighborhood character and how it is intertwined with local identity and place meanings, preserving elements of the built environment is importance to maintaining sense of place. Currently state historic preservation laws are very weak, and do not allow historic designation without owner consent. Changing these laws at the state level would enable the community to designate important structures as

landmarks, and make it more difficult to demolish them. Updating the city's Historic Resources Inventory is also an important step toward conserving the neighborhood's built environment and cultural heritage.

Development process reform is also significant for maintaining continuity of place and identity through neighborhood character. As illustrated in the Central Lofts case, the community has little meaningful input into what is built. Even when every known stakeholder group opposes a design, it is still possible for it to be approved by the city. I recommend revisiting this process in a way that facilitates meaningful stakeholder input on commercial and market-rate residential developments. Updating the *St. Johns Lombard Plan* would probably be advisable, but changing the process through which projects are approved - from notification to final design - is probably more important. Several residents have shared in interviews their impression of 'performative engagement', where planners and city officials are essentially 'checking the box' of stakeholder participation. In the Ivy Island scenario some activists also had the impression of the street realignment being a 'done deal', where community opposition was not truly considered, and the *St. Johns/Lombard Plan* was 'cherry-picked' to justify PBOT's objectives. Additionally, though developers are required to meet with the neighborhood association if requested, there are no specific guidelines for how much of their suggestions (if any) they need to incorporate. Ultimately that decision is at the discretion of the Design Commission, and there is little recourse, as seen in the Central Lofts case. This is at the heart of my recommendations for process reform; the

community should have meaningful opportunities for input that are backed of policy and potentially veto power is a stakeholder coalition determines a large development does not contain any community benefit.

Despite my best efforts, renter participation was low in the study. It was even low in the non-participation survey. This is an area that strongly merits further research; specifically, how does lack of housing security due to policy negatively impact community engagement among renters? This research may be helpful in securing better renter protections, by capturing the lost value of those residents' potential contributions to their communities. Another opportunity to expand this particular research over a longer period of time and with more resources, would be to conduct several more iterations of REP with specific demographic groups. For example, residents of Cathedral Gardens public housing development, and residents of the Marvel 29 complex. This would provide powerful insight into how these two groups - on opposite ends of the socioeconomic spectrum - see St. Johns. Finally, applying this method to people who would not describe themselves as 'attached' to St. Johns would also be valuable; specifically, people who feel ambivalent or even adverse to living in the neighborhood. All of these applications of REP have exciting potential to provide insight for city planners, policy makers, and the community itself.

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APPENDIX A - OTHER CODES

1. Cognitions and Affect

Affective Statements

<i>Code</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Evaluative	36	22
Personal affect	84	35
Spiritual connection	4	3
Thankful/Grateful	33	16

Understanding different ways of articulating attachment was not the objective of the research, but it was a noteworthy theme in the data, so I am including it here. Some of these distinctions between *Evaluative* and *Personal affect* are fairly subtle, but I was wanted to parse out differences in language as much as possible. The table below illustrates the difference between Evaluative and Personal affect;

Evaluative

There's just something about the soaring bridge views, Columbia beachfront, and all those tall tall trees that inspires awe.

The dock is so peaceful.

... on the downside it feels a bit 'corporate'

Beautiful views of the bridge and nature...

Cathedral Park as a whole is such a special place.

Times were tough, Tulip made them better.

Personal affect

I love the bends in the metal, the backstory of the trains' journeys, and the experiences the tracks can grant you.

The feeling of nostalgia engulfed me...

I'm proud that the neighborhood can sustain these businesses.

I love our bridge, and I love our independent streak.

...the inclusive joy of the St. Johns scene was both a relief and an inspiration.

The difference between these two codes is in the use of affective language like ‘love’ and the first person (*Personal Affect*), versus a more detached statement that is informed by emotion, but not centered on self in the same way in (*Evaluative*). *Spiritual connection* and *Thankful/grateful* were ‘labeling’ codes, meaning that they were applied whenever that specific language was used.

Attitude/Belief

Attitude/Belief is one step beyond *Evaluative*, in that it attributes value but is even less centered on self. In this case it isn’t presented as informed by subjective experience, but rather these are opinions presented as fact. The difference is very subtle, but these statements articulate meaning behind attachment, rather than just attachment itself. There is a great deal of overlap with the *Shared meaning of importance* code in the *St. Johns narrative/imaginary* category.

“Roosevelt represents our community, the city’s, and PPS’ re-investment in our kids. It represents the best of St. Johns”

“The Fixin’ To isn’t just a place, but part of the community.”

“What a beautiful reuse of a building that could’ve just been lost to ‘development.’”

“It attracts the good and bad of the neighborhood which nowadays often feels like a 50/50 split between dysfunction and vitality.”

“The square is a very important part of St. Johns. It’s the official or unofficial central location of the downtown core...”

“The pride people have in St. Johns is what makes this community great.”

2. Places

<i>Place</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Baltimore Woods	3	2
Cathedral Park	26	24
Former City Hall	2	2
George Middle School	2	2
Green Anchors	1	1
Individual block	7	6
James John Elm.	8	7
Kelley Point	6	5
Library	21	20
Main Street	14	14
Open Meadow School	2	2
Pier Park	14	13
Place of employment	5	3
Place of residence	21	16
Plaza	18	16
Railroad bridge	2	2
Roosevelt High	11	11
St. Johns Bridge	24	21
Smith Bybee	2	2
St. Johns Community Center	5	5
Water treatment bldg	3	3
Willamette River	11	9

3. *Businesses*

<i>Business</i>	<i>Occurrences</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Ace Hardware	2	2
Affogato	1	1
Anna Bananas	2	2
Aspire/CP Arts Collective	5	5
Beer Porch	4	4
Cathedral Coffee shop	3	3
Comic Cave	3	3
Etcetera	1	1
Fencing Salle	2	2
Fixin' To	5	5
Grocery Outlet	1	1
Leisure	6	6
The Man's Shop	8	6
Marie's	1	1
McMenamin's	5	5
Moonstruck Chocolate	1	1
Own business	2	2
Pattie's Home Plate	3	3
Rose City Taqueria	1	1
Salty Teacup	4	4
Signal Station	5	5
St. Johns Center for Opportunity	7	6
Slim's	5	5
St. Johns Cinema	8	8

St. Johns Kitchen	1	1
Starbuck's	2	2
Taqueria Santa Cruz	3	3
Tre Bone	1	1
Tulip Pastry	5	5
West Coast Fitness	3	3
What a Deal	1	1
The Wishing Well	2	2

The top business and their reasons for being selected:

- Aspire/CP Arts Collective (6) - Provides creative programming for children and adults, community center
- Beer Porch (4) - Place to socialize with neighbors and friends (social), good food options (amenity)
- Fixin' To (5) - Meeting place (social), community-minded (value), live music (amenity), nice owners
- Leisure (6) - Good vibe, social scene, nice owners
- The Man Shop (7) - A "real store," friendly owners, makes you feel connected to old SJ, provides useful service, good signage, community hub, articulates SJ identity
- McMenamin's (5) - Connection to local history, good place to relax on the patio
- The Salty Teacup (4) - Availability of unique local goods
- Signal Station (5) - Multi-generational use, memories, historic building
- SJCO (7) - "Represents the resilience and focus of our community," values of advocacy and activism, affordable housing effort, communal hub
- Slim's (5) - Habitual use, staple
- St. Johns Cinema (8) - Affordable admission and concessions (amenity), small business (value), history, memories
- Tulip Pastry (5) - Habitual use, memories, multi-generational use, friendly owners

The business values most frequently mentioned with these choices were: friendly owners; being a 'local staple' due to longevity; social utility as a gathering space; and a small business ethos of affordable prices and local goods.

APPENDIX B - RECRUITMENT

1. Recruitment poster (8.5 x 11 inches, full color)



NOW RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS FOR THE ST. JOHNS PLACE ATTACHMENT PROJECT

Do you love St. Johns, and wouldn't want to live anywhere else?

What and why: This PSU thesis project seeks to understand residents' relationship to their neighborhood, with the objective of facilitating community dialog, increased civic engagement, and self-reflection on relationship to place. Images and text from the project will create a community archive that can be a useful tool for advocacy, education, documentation and more.

How the project works: 50 St. Johns residents will be given disposable cameras to photograph 12 of their favorite places or things in the neighborhood, and write short paragraphs about each of their choices. They will also draw a "mental map" of the neighborhood. There may be a brief follow-up interview as well.

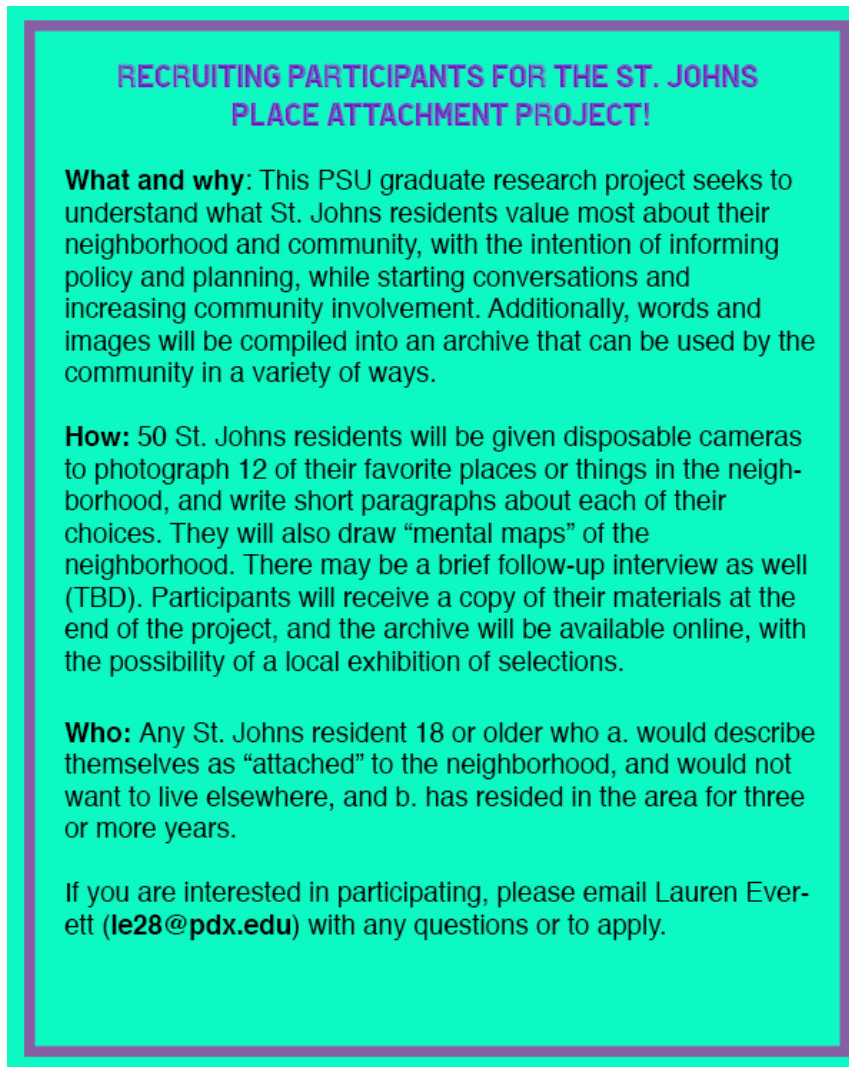
Participants must be over 18, have lived in St. Johns or Cathedral Park for at least three years, and self-identify as "attached" to the neighborhood. Everyone will receive a copy of their materials at the end of the project, and everyone's photos and writing will be compiled as a publicly accessible archive, on a TBD platform. As such, **anonymity cannot be guaranteed**, though participants may choose to withhold their name from the database.

If you are interested in participating, please email Lauren Everett (le28@pdx.edu) for more information and to answer a brief demographic questionnaire.

Selected participants will be notified by the end of January and packets with cameras and other materials will be available for pick up in early February at the St. Johns Center for Opportunity. Participants will have two weeks to complete the activities.

This research is supported by a STAR grant from the Institute for Sustainable Solutions at PSU.

2. Facebook graphic



3. Small flyer text (5 x 4 inches, black and white)

Now recruiting participants for a PSU thesis project on place attachment in St. Johns!

What and Why: My research seeks to understand the nature and depth of place identity and place attachment among St. Johns residents, with the objective of facilitating community dialog, increased civic engagement, and self-reflection on relationship to place. This participatory research project will also create a community archive of images and words that can be a useful tool for advocacy, education, documentation and more.

How: 50 St. Johns residents will be given disposable cameras to photograph 12 of their favorite places or things in the neighborhood, and write short paragraphs about each of their choices. They will also draw a “mental map” of the neighborhood. There may be a brief follow-up interview as well. Participants will receive a copy of their materials at the end of the project, and everyone’s photos and writing will be compiled as a publicly available resource, on a TBD platform. As such, *anonymity cannot be guaranteed*, though participants may choose to withhold their name from the database.

Who: Any St. Johns resident 18 or older who a. would describe themselves as “attached” to the neighborhood, and would not want to live elsewhere, and b. has resided in the area for three or more years.

If you are interested in participating, please email Lauren Everett (le28@pdx.edu) for more information and a brief demographic questionnaire. The deadline for applying is January 25th, and all selected participants will be notified by the end of January. Packets with cameras and other materials will be available for pick up in early February at the St. Johns Center for Opportunity, and participants will have two weeks to complete the activities.